

V. I. LENIN

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EXPLANATORY NOTES

I

I

I

PART I
THE PRINCIPAL PROBLEMS OF THE PERIOD
OF WAR COMMUNISM

ECONOMICS AND POLITICS IN THE ERA OF THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT*

I HAD intended in connection with the second anniversary of the Soviet government to write a small pamphlet dealing with the subject indicated in the title. But owing to the rush of everyday work I have been unable so far to get beyond the preliminary preparations for certain of the sections. I have therefore decided to try the experiment of a brief, summarised exposition of what, in my opinion, are the chief thoughts on the subject. A summarised exposition, of course, possesses many disadvantages and shortcomings. But perhaps for a short article in a journal a modest aim will nevertheless prove achievable, namely, to present a statement of the problem and the groundwork for its discussion by the Communists in the various countries.

I

Theoretically, there can be no doubt that between capitalism and communism there lies a definite transition period. The latter cannot but combine the features and properties of both these systems of social enterprise. This transition period cannot but be a period of struggle between moribund capitalism and nascent communism—in other words, between capitalism which has been defeated but not yet destroyed and communism which has been born but which is still very feeble.

The necessity for a whole historical era distinguished by these features of a transition period should be obvious not only to a Marxist, but to every educated person who is in any degree acquainted with the theory of development. Yet all the talk on the subject of the transition to socialism which we hear from present day representatives of petty bourgeois democracy (and such, in spite of their spurious Socialist label, are all the repre-

representatives of the Second International, including such individuals as MacDonald, Jean Longuet, Kautsky and Friedrich Adler) is marked by complete obliviousness to this obvious truth. Petty bourgeois democrats are distinguished by an aversion to the class struggle, by the hope of getting along without the class struggle, by their endeavour to smooth over and reconcile, and to take the edge off sharp corners. Such democrats therefore either avoid recognising the necessity for a whole historical period of transition from capitalism to communism or regard it as their duty to concoct plans for reconciling the two contending forces, instead of leading the struggle of one of these forces against the other.

II

In Russia, owing to the distinct backwardness and petty bourgeois character of our country, the dictatorship of the proletariat is bound to be distinguished by certain peculiarities as compared with advanced countries. But the basic forces—and the basic forms of social production—are the same in Russia as in any capitalist country, so that these peculiarities cannot affect the main thing.

These basic forms of social production are capitalism, petty commodity production and communism. The basic forces are the bourgeoisie, the petty bourgeoisie (particularly the peasantry) and the proletariat.

The economic system of Russia in the era of the dictatorship of the proletariat represents a struggle of the first steps of labour communistically united—within the bounds of a single vast state—against petty commodity production and capitalism, which has been preserved and is also reviving on the basis of petty commodity production.

In Russia, labour is united communistically for the reason that, firstly, private ownership in the means of production has been abolished, and, secondly, the proletarian state power is organising large scale production on state owned land and in state owned enterprises on a national scale, is distributing labour power among the various branches of production and the various enterprises, and

is distributing to the toilers large quantities of articles of consumption belonging to the state

We say "the first steps" of communism in Russia (so spoken of also in the programme of our Party adopted in March 1919), because all these conditions have been only partially achieved in our country, or, to put it otherwise the achievement of these conditions is only in its early stages. We accomplished instantly at one revolutionary blow, all that can be instantly accomplished in general for instance, on the first day of the dictatorship of the proletariat, November 8 (October 26), 1917, private property in land was abolished without compensation to the large owners, the large landowners were expropriated*. Within the space of a few months practically all the large capitalists, owners of mills and factories, joint stock companies, banks, railroads, and so forth, were also expropriated without compensation. The state organisation of large scale production in industry and the transition from "workers' control" to "workers' administration" of factories, mills and railroads—that, in the main, has already been accomplished, but in relation to agriculture it has only just begun ("state farms," i.e., large scale farms organised by the workers' state on state-owned land). Similarly, we have only just begun the organisation of various forms of co-operative societies of small husbandmen as a transition from petty commodity agriculture to communist agriculture.¹ The same must be said of the state organisation of the distribution of products in place of private trade, i.e., the state collection and state delivery of grain to the cities and of industrial products to the countryside. Available statistical data on this question will be given below.

Peasant production continues to be petty commodity production. Here we have an extremely broad and profoundly and firmly rooted basis for capitalism. On this basis capitalism has been preserved and is again reviving, locked in a bitter struggle

¹ The number of state farms and agricultural communes in Soviet Russia amounts to approximately 3,536 and 1,961 respectively, and the number of agricultural articles to 3,696. Our Central Statistical Board is at present making an exact census of all state farms and communes. The results will begin to become available in November 1919.

with communism. The forms of this struggle are bag trading and profiteering, as against the state collection of grain (and other products) and the state distribution of products in general.

III

We shall cite concrete data in illustration of these abstract theoretical propositions.

According to the figures of Komprod (the People's Commissariat of Food), state collections of grain in Russia between August 14 (1) 1917, and August 1, 1918, amounted to about 30 000,000 poods and in the following year to about 110,000,000 poods. During the first three months of the next collection campaign (1919-20) the total collections will presumably attain to about 45,000,000 poods, as against 37,000,000 poods for the same months (August-October) in 1918.

These figures obviously speak of a slow but steady improvement in the state of affairs from the point of view of the victory of communism over capitalism. This improvement is being achieved in spite of the incredible difficulties of the civil war which is being organised by Russian and foreign capitalists, harnessing all the forces of the strongest powers in the world.

Therefore, in spite of the lies and slanders of the bourgeoisie of all countries and of their confessed and unconfessed henchmen (the "Socialists" of the Second International), one thing remains beyond dispute, *viz.*, that from the point of view of the basic economic problems, the victory of communism over capitalism is assured for our dictatorship of the proletariat. All over the world the bourgeoisie is raging and fuming against Bolshevism and is organising military expeditions, plots, etc., against the Bolsheviks just because it fully realises that our success in reconstructing our social economy is inevitable, that is, provided we are not crushed by military force. And they are not managing to crush us in this way.

The extent of our success over capitalism in the short time we have had at our disposal, and amidst the incredible difficulties under which we have been obliged to function, will be seen from the following summarised figures. The Central Statistical Board

has just prepared statistics for the press regarding the production and consumption of grain, not, it is true for the whole of Soviet Russia, but for twenty six of her gubernias¹

The results are as follows

| Gubernias of Soviet Russia | Population in Mil lions | Production of grain (excluding seed and fodder) in millions of poods | Commis sariat of Food | Profilteers | Total amount of grain at disposal of population in millions of poods | Grain consumption per head of popu lation in poods |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------|---|-----------------------------|-------------|---|--|
| Producing gubernias | Urban 4.4 | — | 20.9 | 20.6 | 41.5 | 9.5 |
| | Rural 28.6 | 63.4 | — | — | 481.8 | 16.9 |
| Consuming gubernias | Urban 5.9 | — | 20.0 | 20.0 | 40.0 | 6.8 |
| | Rural 13.8 | 114.0 | 12.1 | 27.8 | 151.4 | 11.0 |
| Total (26 gub.) | 52.7 | 739.4 | 53.0 | 68.4 | 714.7 | 13.6 |

Thus, approximately half the amount of grain supplied to the cities is provided by the Commissariat of Food and the other half by the profiteers. This same proportion is revealed by a careful investigation, made in 1918, of the food consumed by city workers. In this connection it should be borne in mind that for bread supplied by the state the worker pays *one ninth* of what he pays the profiteer. The profiteering price for bread is *ten times greater* than the state price. That is what is revealed by a careful investigation of workers' budgets.

IV

If one carefully reflects on the figures quoted, one finds that they present an exact picture of the fundamental features of present day economy in Russia.

The toilers have been emancipated from the age old oppressors and exploiters, the landlords and the capitalists. This step in the direction of real freedom and real equality, a step which for its extent, its size, its rapidity, is without parallel in the world, is ignored by the followers of the bourgeoisie (including the petty

¹ Gubernia—a province—Ed. Eng. ed.

bourgeois democrats), who talk of freedom and equality, meaning parliamentary bourgeois democracy, which they falsely declare to be "democracy" in general, or "pure democracy" (Kautsky)

But the toilers are concerned only with real equality and with real freedom (freedom from the landlords and the capitalists), and that is why they stand so firmly for Soviet power

In this peasant country it was the peasants as a whole who were the first to gain, who gained the most and gained immediately from the dictatorship of the proletariat. The peasant in Russia starved under the landlords and the capitalists. Throughout the long centuries of our history, the peasant has never yet had the opportunity of working for himself: he starved, while surrendering hundreds of millions of poods of grain to the capitalists, for the cities and for foreign delivery. It was under the dictatorship of the proletariat that the peasant *for the first time* worked for himself and *fed better than the city dweller*. The peasant has seen real freedom for the first time—freedom to eat his bread, freedom from starvation. In the distribution of the land, as we know, equality has been established to a maximum degree: in the vast majority of cases the peasants are dividing the land according to the number of "mouths"¹

Socialism means the abolition of classes

In order to abolish classes one must, firstly, overthrow the landlords and capitalists. That part of our task has been accomplished, but it is only a part, and moreover, *not the most difficult* part. In order to abolish classes one must, secondly, abolish the difference between workingman and peasant, *one must make them all workers*. This cannot be done all at once. This task is incomparably more difficult and will of necessity be a protracted one. This task cannot be accomplished by overthrowing a class. It can be solved only by the organisational reconstruction of the whole social economy, by a transition from individual, disunited, petty commodity production to large scale social enterprise. This transition must of necessity be extremely protracted. This transition

¹ *I.e.*, the number of individuals belonging to each peasant household.—Ed. Eng. ed.

may only be delayed and complicated by hasty and incautious administrative legislation. The transition can be accelerated only by affording such assistance to the peasant as will enable him to improve his whole technique of agriculture immeasurably, to reform it radically.

In order to solve the second and most difficult part of the problem, the proletariat, after having defeated the bourgeoisie, must unswervingly conduct its policy towards the peasantry along the following fundamental lines: the proletariat must separate, demarcate the peasant toiler from the peasant owner, the peasant worker from the peasant huckster, the peasant who labours from the peasant who profiteers.

In this demarcation lies the *whole essence* of socialism.

And it is not surprising that the Socialists in word but petty bourgeois democrats in deed (the Martovs, the Chernovs, the Kautskys and so on) do not understand this essence of socialism.

The demarcation we here refer to is extremely difficult, for in actual life all the features of the "peasant," however different they may be, however contradictory they may be, are fused into one whole. Nevertheless demarcation is possible, not only is it possible, but it inevitably follows from the conditions of peasant economy and peasant life. The toiling peasant has for ages been oppressed by the landlords, the capitalists, the hucksters and the profiteers and by *their* state, including even the most democratic bourgeois republics. Throughout the ages the toiling peasant has cherished hatred and enmity towards the oppressors and the exploiters, and these sentiments, engendered by the conditions of life, *compel* the peasant to seek for an alliance with the workers against the capitalist and against the profiteer and trader. Yet at the same time, economic conditions, the conditions of commodity production, inevitably turn the peasant (not always, but in the vast majority of cases) into a huckster and profiteer.

The statistics quoted above reveal a striking difference between the peasant toiler and the peasant profiteer. That peasant who during 1918-19 delivered to the hungry workers of the cities 40,000,000 poods of grain at fixed state prices, who delivered this grain to the state organs in spite of all the shortcomings of the

latter shortcomings which are fully realised by the workers' government, but which are unavoidable in the first period of the transition to socialism, that peasant is a toiling peasant, a comrade on an equal footing with the socialist worker, his faithful ally, his own brother in the fight against the yoke of capital. Whereas that peasant who clandestinely sold 40,000,000 poods of grain at ten times the state price, taking advantage of the need and hunger of the city worker, deceiving the state, everywhere increasing and creating deceit, robbery and fraud—that peasant is a profiteer, the ally of the capitalist, the class enemy of the worker, an exploiter. For whoever possesses a surplus of grain gathered from land belonging to the whole state with the help of implements in which in one way or another is embodied the labour not only of the peasant but also of the worker and so on, whoever possesses a surplus of grain and profiteers in that grain is an exploiter of the hungry worker.

You are violators of freedom, equality and democracy—they shout at us on all hands, pointing to the inequality of the worker and the peasant under our constitution, to the dispersal of the Constituent Assembly,* to the forcible confiscation of surplus grain, and so forth. We reply: Never in the world has there been a state which has done so much to remove the actual inequality, the actual lack of freedom from which the toiling peasant has suffered for centuries. But we shall never recognise equality with the peasant profiteer, just as we do not recognise "equality" between the exploiter and the exploited, between the full and the hungry, and the "freedom" of the former to rob the latter. And those educated people who refuse to recognise this difference we shall treat as White Guards even though they may call themselves democrats, Socialists, internationalists, Kautskys, Chernovs and Martovs.

V

Socialism means the abolition of classes. The dictatorship of the proletariat has done all it could to abolish classes. But classes cannot be abolished all at once.

And classes remain and will remain in the era of the dicta-

torship of the proletariat When classes disappear the dictatorship will become unnecessary Without the dictatorship of the proletariat they will not disappear

Classes have remained, but in the era of the dictatorship of the proletariat *every* class has undergone a change, and the relations between the classes have also changed The class struggle does not disappear under the dictatorship of the proletariat, it merely assumes different forms

Under capitalism the proletariat was an oppressed class a class deprived of all ownership in the means of production it was the only class which stood directly and completely opposed to the bourgeoisie and therefore it alone was capable of being revolutionary to the very end Having overthrown the bourgeoisie and conquered political power, the proletariat has become the *ruling* class, it holds the power of the state, it has the disposal of the means of production, which have now become social, it leads the wavering and intermediary elements and classes, it crushes the growing energy of resistance of the exploiters All these are *specific* tasks of the class struggle tasks which the proletariat formerly did not set itself, and could not have set itself

The class of exploiters, the landlords and capitalists, has not disappeared under the dictatorship of the proletariat, and it cannot disappear all at once The exploiters have been smashed but not destroyed They still have an international base in the form of international capital, a branch of which they represent They still retain a part of the means of production they still have money they still have vast social connections Just because they have been defeated their energy of resistance has increased a hundred and thousand fold The "art" of state, military and economic administration gives them a superiority, and a very great superiority, so that their importance is incomparably greater than their numerical strength among the population would warrant The class struggle waged by the overthrown exploiters against the triumphant vanguard of the exploited, *i.e.*, against the proletariat, has become incomparably more bitter And it cannot be otherwise in the case of a revolution, if this conception is not replaced (as it is by all the heroes of the Second International) by reformist illusions,

Finally, the peasantry, like the petty bourgeoisie in general, occupies a halfway intermediary position *even* under the dictatorship of the proletariat on the one hand, it consists of a fairly large (and in backward Russia vast) mass of toilers united by the common aim of the toilers to emancipate themselves from the landlord and the capitalist, on the other hand, it consists of disunited small masters property owners and traders. Such an economic position inevitably causes vacillations between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. And in view of the acute form which the struggle between these latter has assumed, in view of the incredibly severe break up of all social relations, and in view of the great attachment of the peasants and the petty bourgeoisie generally to the old, the routine and the unchangeable, it is only natural that we should inevitably find them swinging from one side to the other, that we should find them wavering, changeable, uncertain, and so on.

The task of the proletariat in relation to this class—or to these social elements—is to lead it and to strive to establish its influence over it. The proletariat must lead the vacillating and unstable.

If we compare all the basic forces and classes and then interrelations, as modified by the dictatorship of the proletariat, we shall realise how unutterably nonsensical and theoretically stupid is the common petty bourgeois idea, shared by all representatives of the Second International, that the transition to socialism is possible “by means of democracy” in general. The fundamental source of this error lies in the prejudice inherited from the bourgeoisie as to the absolute, classless meaning of “democracy.” As a matter of fact, democracy itself passes into an entirely new phase under the dictatorship of the proletariat, while the class struggle is raised to a higher level and dominates over each and every form.

General talk about freedom, equality and democracy is in fact but a stereotyped repetition of conceptions which are only a cast from the relations of commodity production. To attempt to solve the concrete problems of the dictatorship of the proletariat by means of such general talk is to accept the theories and principles of the bourgeoisie all along the line. From the point of view of the proletariat, the question can be put only in the following way: freedom from the oppression of which class? equality between

which classes? democracy based on private property, or on the struggle for the abolition of private property?—and so forth

Long ago Engels in his *Anti Dühring* explained that the conception of equality is a cast from the relations of commodity production and becomes transformed into a prejudice if equality is not understood to mean the *abolition of classes* * This elementary truth regarding the distinction between the bourgeois democratic and the socialist conceptions of equality is constantly being forgotten. But if it is not forgotten, it becomes obvious that by overthrowing the bourgeoisie the proletariat takes a decisive step towards the abolition of classes, and that in order to complete the process the proletariat must continue its class struggle, making use of the apparatus of state power and of all methods of combating, influencing and bringing pressure to bear on the overthrown bourgeoisie and the vacillating petty bourgeoisie

October 30 1919

THE FAMINE *

A Letter to the Workers of Petrograd

COMRADES

The other day I received a visit from your delegate, a Party comrade, a worker in the Putilov Works. This comrade drew a detailed and extremely painful picture of the food shortage in Petrograd. We all know that the food situation is just as acute in a number of the industrial gubernias, and that starvation is knocking just as menacingly at the door of the workers and the poor generally.

And side by side with this we observe a riot of profiteering in grain and other food products. The food shortage is not due to the fact that there is no bread in Russia, but to the fact that the bourgeoisie and the rich generally are putting up a last decisive fight against the rule of the toilers, against the state of the workers, against the Soviet government, on this most important and acute of questions, the question of bread. The bourgeoisie and the rich generally, including the village rich, the kulaks, are doing their best to thwart the grain monopoly, they are dislocating the distribution of grain undertaken by the state for the purpose of supplying bread to the population, and particularly to the workers, toilers and needy. The bourgeoisie are violating the fixed prices, they are profiteering in grain, they are making a hundred, two hundred and more rubles profit on every pood of grain, they are undermining the grain monopoly and the proper distribution of grain by resorting to bribery and corruption and by maliciously supporting everything tending to destroy the power of the workers, which is endeavouring to put into effect the prime, basic and root principle of socialism: he who toils not, neither shall he eat.

He who toils not, neither shall he eat—this is comprehensible.

to every toiler Every worker every poor peasant, even every middle peasant everybody who has suffered need in his lifetime, and everybody who has ever lived by his own toil, is in agreement with this Nine tenths of the population of Russia are in agreement with this truth In this simple elementary and obvious truth lies the basis of socialism, the indestructible source of its strength, the indelible pledge of its final victory

But the whole point of the matter is that it is one thing to signify one's agreement with this truth, to swear that one professes it, to give it verbal recognition, but it is another to be able to put it into effect When thousands and millions of people are suffering the pangs of hunger (in Petrograd, in the non agricultural gubernias and in Moscow) in a country where millions and millions of poods of grain are being concealed by the rich, the kulaks and the profiteers—in a country which calls itself a socialist Soviet republic—there is matter for the most serious and profound thought on the part of every enlightened worker and peasant

He who toils not, neither shall he eat—how is this to be put into effect? It is as clear as daylight that in order to put it into effect we require, firstly, a state grain monopoly, *i.e.*, the absolute prohibition of all private trade in grain, the compulsory delivery of all surplus grain to the state at a fixed price, the absolute prohibition of all withholding and concealment of surplus grain, no matter by whom Secondly, we require the strictest registration of all grain surpluses and the irreproachable transport of grain from places of abundance to places of shortage, and the creation of reserves for consumption, for industrial purposes and for seed Thirdly, we require a just and proper distribution of bread, controlled by the workers' state, the proletarian state, among all the citizens of the state, a distribution which shall permit of no privileges and advantages to the rich

One has only to reflect ever so slightly on these conditions for ending the food shortage to realise the abysmal stupidity of the contemptible anarchist windbags, who deny the necessity of a state power (and of a power which will be ruthless in its severity towards the bourgeoisie and ruthlessly firm towards disorganisers) for the transition from capitalism to communism and for the eman

cipation of the toilers from all forms of oppression and exploitation. It is at this moment, when our revolution is directly tackling the concrete and practical tasks involved in the realisation of socialism—and that is its indefeasible merit—it is at this moment and in connection with this most important of questions the question of bread that the necessity becomes absolutely clear for an iron revolutionary government, for the dictatorship of the proletariat, for the organised collection of products for their transport and distribution on a mass, national scale: a distribution which will take into account the requirements of hundreds of millions of people which will take into account the conditions and the results of production for a year and many years ahead (for there are sometimes years of bad harvest, there are methods of land improvement for increasing grain crops which require years of work, and so forth).

Romanov and Kerensky left as a heritage to the working class a country utterly impoverished by their predatory, criminal and most burdensome war, a country picked clean by Russian and foreign imperialists. Food will suffice for all only if we keep the strictest account of every pound, only if every pound is distributed absolutely systematically. There is also an acute shortage of food for machines *i.e.* fuel: the railroads and factories will come to a standstill, unemployment and famine will ruin the nation, if we do not bend every effort to establish a ruthless economy of consumption and proper distribution. We are faced by disaster, it has drawn terribly near. An intolerably severe May will be followed by a still more severe June, July and August.

Our state grain monopoly exists in law, but in practice it is being thwarted on every hand by the bourgeoisie. The rural rich, the kulak the parasite who has been robbing the whole neighbourhood for decades prefers to enrich himself by profiteering and illicit distilling, that, you see, is so advantageous for his pocket, while he throws the blame for the food shortage on the Soviet government. In the same way are acting the political defenders of the kulak, the Cadets, the Right Socialist Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks, who are overtly and covertly "working" against the grain monopoly and against the Soviet government.

The party of spineless individuals, *i.e.*, the Left Socialist Revolutionaries, are displaying their spinelessness here too they are giving way to the covetous howls and outcries of the bourgeoisie, they are crying out against the grain monopoly, they are "protesting" against the food dictatorship, they are allowing themselves to be intimidated by the bourgeoisie, they are afraid to fight the kulak, and are hysterically tossing hither and thither, recommending that the fixed prices be raised, that private trading be sanctioned, and so forth

This party of spineless individuals reflects in politics very much of what takes place in ordinary life when the kulak incites the poor peasants against the Soviets, bribes them by, say, giving some poor peasant a pood of grain not for six, but for three rubles, so that the poor peasant, thus corrupted, may himself "profit" by speculation, himself make a "deal" by selling that pood of grain at a profiteering price of one hundred and fifty rubles, and himself become a decrifier of the Soviets, which have prohibited private trading in grain

Whoever is capable of reflecting, whoever is desirous of reflecting ever so little, will see clearly what line this fight has taken

Either the advanced and enlightened workers triumph and unite around themselves the poor peasant masses, establish rigid order, a mercilessly severe government, a genuine dictatorship of the proletariat—either they compel the kulak to submit, and institute a proper distribution of food and fuel on a national scale, or the bourgeoisie, with the help of the kulaks, and with the indirect support of the spineless and mentally confused (the anarchists and the Left Socialist Revolutionaries), overthrow the Soviet power and set up a Russo German or a Russo Japanese Kornilov, who will present the people with a sixteen hour working day, one eighth of a pound of bread per week, mass shooting of workers and jail tortures, as has been the case in Finland and the Ukraine

Either—or

There is no middle course

The situation of the country is desperate in the extreme.

Whoever gives a thought to political events cannot but see that the Cadets are coming to an understanding with the Right

Socialist Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks as to who would be "pléasanter," a Russo German or a Russo Japanese Kornilov, as to who would crush the revolution more effectively and reliably, a crowned or a republican Kornilov

It is time all enlightened and advanced workers came to an understanding. It is time they pulled themselves together and realised that every minute's delay may spell ruin to the country and ruin to the revolution.

Half measures are of no avail. Complaining will lead us nowhere. Attempts to secure food and fuel "in a retail fashion," i.e., every factory, every workshop for itself, will only increase the disorganisation and assist the avaricious, filthy and dastardly work of the profiteers.

That is why, comrades workers of Petrograd, I have taken the liberty of addressing this letter to you. Petrograd is not Russia. The Petrograd workers are only a small part of the workers of Russia. But they are one of the best, most advanced, most class conscious, most revolutionary, most steadfast detachments of the working class and the toilers of Russia, and the least liable to succumb to empty phrases, to weak willed despair and to the intimidation of the bourgeoisie. And it has frequently happened at critical moments in the life of a nation that even small but advanced detachments of advanced classes have drawn the rest after them, have fired the masses with the spirit of revolutionary enthusiasm and have accomplished tremendous historic feats.

"There were forty thousand of us at the Putilov Works," the delegate from the Petrograd workers said to me. "But the majority of them were 'temporary' workers, not proletarians, unreliable, flabby individuals. Fifteen thousand are now left, but these are proletarians, tried and steeled in the fight."

This is the sort of vanguard of the revolution—in Petrograd and throughout the country—that must sound the call, *that must rise in their mass*, that must understand that the salvation of the country is in their hands, that from them is demanded a heroism not less than that which they displayed in January and October 1905 and in February and October 1917, that a great "crusade" must be organised against the food profiteers, the kulaks, the

parasites, the disorganisers and the bribers, a great "*crusade* against the violators of strict state order in the collection, transport and distribution of food for the people and food for the machines

The country and the revolution can be saved only if the advanced workers rise *en masse*. We need tens of thousands of advanced and steeled proletarians, enlightened enough to explain matters to the millions of poor peasants all over the country and to assume the leadership of these millions, tempered enough to cast out of their midst and to shoot all who allow themselves to be "tempted"—as indeed happens—by the temptations of profiteering and to be transformed from fighters for the cause of the people into robbers, steadfast enough and devoted enough to the revolution to bear in an organised way all the hardships of the *crusade* into every corner of the country for the establishment of order, for the consolidation of the local organs of the Soviet government and for the exercise of control in the localities over every pood of grain and every pood of fuel

It is far more difficult to do this than to display heroism for a few days without leaving the place one is accustomed to and without joining the *crusade*, and by confining oneself to a spasmodic insurrection against the idiot monster Romanov or the fool and braggart Kerensky. Heroism displayed in prolonged and stubborn organisational work on a national scale is immeasurably more difficult than, but at the same time immeasurably superior to, heroism displayed in an insurrection. But it has always been the strength of working class parties and of the working class that they courageously and directly look danger in the face, that they do not fear to admit danger and soberly weigh the forces in their own camp and in the camp of the enemy, the camp of the exploiters. The revolution is progressing, developing and growing. The problems that face us are also growing. The struggle is broadening and deepening. Proper distribution of food and fuel, their procurement in greater quantities and their strict registration and control by the workers on a national scale—that is the real and chief approach to socialism, that is not so much a revolutionary task in general as a communist task, one of the tasks on which the toilers and the poor must offer determined battle to capitalism

And it is worth devoting all one's strength to such a battle, its difficulties are immense, but the cause of the abolition of oppression and exploitation for which we are fighting is also immense

When the people are starving, when unemployment is becoming ever more menacing, anyone who conceals a surplus pood of grain, anyone who deprives the state of a pood of fuel is an out and out criminal

At such a time—and for a truly communist society this is always true—every pood of grain and fuel is veritably sacred, much more so than the sacred things used by the priests to confuse the minds of fools, promising them the kingdom of heaven as a reward for slavery on earth. And in order to relieve this genuinely sacred thing of every remnant of the “sacredness” of the priests, we must *take possession of it practically*, we must achieve its proper distribution *in practice*, we must collect the whole of it without exception, every particle of surplus grain must be brought into the state reserves, *the whole country must be swept clean* of concealed or ungarnered grain surpluses, we need the firm hand of the worker to harness every effort in order to increase the output of fuel and to secure the greatest economy and the greatest efficiency in the transport and consumption of fuel

We need a mass “crusade” of the advanced workers to every centre of production of grain and fuel, to every important centre where grain is transported and distributed, a mass “crusade” to increase the intensity of work tenfold, to assist the local organs of the Soviet government in the matter of registration and control, and to destroy profiteering, bribery and disorderliness by armed force. This is not a new problem. History in fact is not creating new problems—all it is doing is to increase the size and scope of the old problems as the scope of the revolution, its difficulties and the dimensions of its historic aims, increase

One of the great and ineradicable features of the October Revolution—the Soviet revolution—was that the advanced worker, *as the leader of the poor, as the captain of the toiling masses of the countryside, as the builder of the state of the toilers*, went among the “people.” Petrograd and other proletarian centres have given thousands and thousands of their best workers to the countryside

The detachments of fighters against Kaledin and Dutov and the food detachments, are not new. The whole thing is that the proximity of disaster the acuteness of the situation compel us to do *ten times more than before*

When the worker became the vanguard leader of the poor he did not thereby become a saint. He led the people forward, but he also became infected with the diseases of petty bourgeois disintegration. The fewer the detachments of best organised of most enlightened and most disciplined and steadfast workers were the more these detachments tended to degenerate, the more frequently the petty property instincts of the past triumphed over the proletarian communist consciousness of the future.

The working class has begun the communist revolution, but it cannot instantly discard the weaknesses and vices inherited from the society of landlords and capitalists, the society of exploiters and parasites, the society based on the filthy cupidity and personal gain of a few and the poverty of the many. But the working class can defeat the old world—and in the end will certainly and inevitably defeat the old world—with its vices and weaknesses, if against the enemy are brought ever greater and more numerous detachments of workers, ever more enlightened by experience and tempered by the hardships of the struggle.

Such is the state of affairs in Russia today. Single handed and disunited we shall never put an end to hunger and unemployment. We need a mass "crusade" of advanced workers to every corner of this vast country. We need ten times more *iron detachments* of the proletariat, enlightened and unreservedly devoted to communism. Then we shall triumph over hunger and unemployment. Then we shall advance the revolution to the true gates of socialism and then too we shall be in a position to conduct a triumphant war of defence against the imperialist plunderers.

May 1918

EVERYBODY ON FOOD AND TRANSPORT WORK! *

I HAVE already had occasion at the last session of the All Russian Central Executive Committee to point out that the half year which has just begun will be a particularly difficult one for the Soviet Republic. During the first half year of 1918 we procured 28,000,000 poods of grain, and during the second half year 67,000,000 poods. The first half year of 1919 will be more difficult than the preceding half year.

The food shortage is growing more and more acute. Typhus is becoming an extremely serious menace **. Heroic efforts are required, but what we are doing is far from adequate.

Can the situation be saved?

Undoubtedly. The capture of Ufa and Orenburg, the victories in the South and the success of the Soviet uprising in the Ukraine open up extremely favourable prospects ***.

We are now in a position to procure far more grain than is required for a semi starvation food ration.

Millions of poods of grain have already been delivered in the East. They are being held up by the poor state of transport. In the South the liberation of the whole of the Voronezh Gubernia and part of the Don Region from Krasnov's Cossacks makes it fully possible to procure quantities of grain far exceeding our earlier calculations. Finally, the grain surplus in the Ukraine is veritably enormous, and the Soviet government of the Ukraine is offering to help us.

Not only can we now avoid famine, but we can even feed the starved population of non agricultural Russia to satiety.

The whole trouble lies in the transport situation and the extreme paucity of food workers.

Every effort must be made, energy must again be infused into the working class masses. We must definitely get out of the cus-

tomary rut of everyday life and work. We must pull ourselves together! We must set about *the revolutionary mobilisation* of workers for food and transport work *we must not confine ourselves* to "current work," but go beyond its bounds and discover new methods of securing additional forces.

Even on the most cautious and pessimistic calculations we now have most weighty grounds for believing that a victory over famine and typhus in this half year (and such a victory is *entirely* feasible) will lead to a *radical* improvement in the whole economic situation since the establishment of contact with the Ukraine and Tashkent removes the main and fundamental causes of the dearth of raw materials.

Of course, the hungry masses are fatigued and that fatigue at times becomes superhuman. But there is a way out and it is undoubtedly possible to arouse new energy all the more since the growth of the proletarian revolution all over the world is becoming increasingly apparent and promises a radical improvement not only in our domestic but also in our foreign relations.

We must pull ourselves together. Every Party organisation, every trade union, every group of organised workers, and even workers who are not organised but are anxious to fight the famine—every group of Soviet workers and citizens generally must ask themselves the following questions:

What can we do to extend and intensify the national crusade against the famine?

Can we not replace male labour by female labour and thus release increasing numbers of men for the difficult duties of transport and food work?

Can we not provide commissars for the locomotive and railroad car repair works?

Can we not provide rank and file workers for the food army?

Should we not tell off every tenth or every fifth person from among our midst, from our group, from our factory, etc., to the food army, or for work in the railroad shops which is more difficult and arduous than usual?

Are not some of us engaged in Soviet or other work which might be relaxed or even discontinued altogether without endanger

ing the foundations of the state? Is it not our duty to mobilise these workers immediately for food and transport work?

Let us rise in ever larger masses, and let us deal one more blow at that accursed maxim of the old capitalist society, a maxim which we have inherited from that society and which infects and perverts every one of us in a greater or less degree the maxim "each for himself and the devil take the hindmost." This heritage from vile, predatory and bloody capitalism is stifling us, crushing us, oppressing us and ruining us more than anything else. We cannot discard this heritage immediately, it must be fought incessantly, more than one crusade will have to be declared and conducted against it.

We are in a position to save millions and tens of millions from famine and typhus. Salvation is at hand. The famine and typhus crisis can be overcome, and overcome completely. It is childish, foolish, shameful to give way to despair. To run away one by one, every man for himself, and each as he knows best, only somehow to "get out of it" oneself, to shove back the more feeble and push forward alone, is to desert, to abandon the sick and exhausted comrades and to render the general situation still worse.

We have created the firm foundation of a Red Army which has now forced its way through incredible difficulties, through the iron wall of the armies of the landlords and capitalists supported by the Anglo French billionaires, which has forced its way through to the principal sources of raw materials, to grain, cotton and coal. We created that foundation by working in a new way, by political propaganda at the front, by organising the Communists in our army, by the self sacrificing organisation and struggle of the best of the working class masses.

We have gained a number of successes both on the external, the military front and on the domestic front, in the fight against the exploiters, in the fight against sabotage and in the fight for the arduous, painful, thorny but *true* path of socialist construction. We are on the verge of a complete and decisive victory both in the Russian and in the international arenas.

A little more effort, and we shall escape from the greedy clutch of famine.

What we have done and are doing for the Red Army we must

also do and with redoubled energies, for the invigoration, extension and intensification of the work of food and transport. All our best workers must devote themselves to *this* work. A place will be found for everybody who desires and is able to work: whoever desires can help to achieve an organised and mass triumph over disruption and famine, every active force, every ability, every speciality, every profession, every responsive individual, can and must be found employment in this *peace army* of food and transport workers—a *peace army* which, in order to achieve complete success, must now support the Red Army and consolidate and take advantage of its successes.

Everybody on food and transport work!

January 26, 1919

REPORT OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE RUSSIAN
COMMUNIST PARTY (BOLSHÉVIKS) AT THE
EIGHTH PARTY CONGRESS

*March 18, 1919 **

COMRADES, permit me to begin with the political report of the Central Committee. To present a report on the political activities of the Central Committee since the last congress is in fact to present a report on the whole of our revolution. And I think everybody will agree that not only is it beyond the powers of any one individual to perform such a task in so short a time, but that generally the task is beyond the powers of one man. I have therefore decided to confine myself only to such points as in my opinion are particularly important and significant both for the history of what our Party was called upon to perform during this period and from the point of view of our present tasks. To devote myself entirely to history at such a time as the present, to recall the past without thinking of the present and the future, would, I must confess, be beyond my capacity.

To begin with foreign policy. It goes without saying that the outstanding features here were our relations with German imperialism and the Peace of Brest Litovsk. And it appears to be worth while speaking of this question because its importance is not merely historical. It appears to me that the proposal the Soviet government made to the Allied powers, or, more correctly, the consent which our government gave to the generally known proposal for a conference on the Prinkipo Islands**—this proposal, and our reply, reproduce something, and something very essential, of the attitude towards imperialism established by us at the time of the Peace of Brest Litovsk. That is why I think that it is essential to deal with the history of this matter in view of the present swift march of events.

When the Peace of Brest Litovsk was decided on, Soviet development, not to speak of Party development, was still in its early stages. You know that at that time our Party generally still possessed too little experience to enable it to determine, even approximately, how fast we would proceed along the path we had chosen. A certain chaotic condition of affairs that was inevitably inherited from the past made it extremely difficult at that time to take a review of events and to make ourselves fully acquainted with what was taking place. Moreover, our extreme isolation from Western Europe and all other countries deprived us of the objective material necessary for forming a judgment of the possible rapidity, or the forms of growth, of the proletarian revolution in the West. This complex situation was responsible for the fact that the question of the Peace of Brest Litovsk was the cause of no little dissension within the ranks of our Party.

But events have proved that from the point of view of the relations of the young socialist republic to world imperialism (to one half of world imperialism) this enforced retreat before German imperialism, which shielded itself behind an extremely oppressive, outrageous and predatory peace, was the only correct course. At that time we who had just overthrown the landlords and the bourgeoisie in Russia, had absolutely no choice but to retreat before the forces of world imperialism. Those who condemned this retreat from the point of view of revolutionaries in reality adopted a fundamentally incorrect and non Marxist point of view. They had forgotten under what conditions, after what long and difficult development in the period of Kerensky and at the cost of what enormous preparatory work within the Soviets, we at last reached a stage when in October, after the severe July defeats,* after the Kornilov revolt ** there at last developed among the vast mass of toilers the determination and readiness to overthrow the bourgeoisie, and when the organised material force necessary for this purpose became available. Naturally, anything like this on an international scale was then out of the question. In view of this, the purpose of the fight against world imperialism was to continue the work of disintegrating imperialism and of enlightening and unifying the working class, which had everywhere begun to

stir, but which had not yet become absolutely definite in its actions

Hence, the only correct policy was the one we adopted in relation to the Peace of Brest Litovsk, although, of course, that policy intensified the enmity of a number of petty bourgeois elements who, by no means under all conditions, nor in all countries, are, may be, or necessarily must be inimical to socialism. In this respect history taught us a lesson, one which must be thoroughly assimilated, for there can be no doubt that we shall frequently be called upon to apply it. The lesson is that the relations of the party of the proletariat with a petty bourgeois democratic party, with those elements, strata, groups and classes which are particularly strong and numerous in Russia, but which exist in all countries, involve an extremely complex and difficult problem. Petty bourgeois elements vacillate between the old society and the new. They cannot serve as the mainspring either of the old society or of the new. At the same time, they are not devoted to the old society in the same degree as the landlords and the bourgeoisie. Patriotism is a sentiment which is bound up with the economic conditions of life precisely of the small proprietors. The bourgeois are more international than the small proprietors. We came up against this fact during the period of the Peace of Brest Litovsk, when the Soviet government set a higher value on the world dictatorship of the proletariat and the world revolution than on all national sacrifices, however severe. In this, we were brought into violent and ruthless collision with the petty bourgeois elements. At that time a number of these elements joined forces with the bourgeoisie and the landlords against us, although they subsequently began to waver.

The question raised here by several comrades as to our relations with petty bourgeois parties is to a large extent dealt with in our programme and will, in fact, crop up in the discussion of every point of the agenda. In the course of our revolution this question has lost its abstract and general character and has become concrete. At the time of the Peace of Brest Litovsk our duty as internationalists was to enable the proletarian elements to strengthen and consolidate themselves at all costs. This at that time repelled the petty bourgeois parties from us. After the German

revolution, as we know, the petty bourgeois elements again began to vacillate. These events opened the eyes of many who, when the proletarian revolution was maturing, judged things from the point of view of the old patriotism, and judged them not only unsocialistically, but incorrectly in general. At the present time, in connection with the difficulties of the food situation and the war which is still being waged against the Entente, we are again observing a wave of vacillation on the part of the petty bourgeois democrats. We were obliged to reckon with these vacillations before, but now a tremendous lesson must be learnt by all of us *viz*, that situations never repeat themselves in their old form. The new situation is far more complex. It can be properly handled, and our policy will be a right one, if we draw on the experience of the Peace of Brest Litovsk. When we gave our consent to the proposal for a conference on the Prinkipo Islands we knew that we were consenting to a peace of an extremely irksome character. But, on the other hand, we now know better how the wave of proletarian revolution is rising in Western Europe, how unrest is turning into conscious discontent and how the latter is leading to the organisation of a world Soviet proletarian movement. While at that time we proceeded gropingly, guessing when the revolution in Europe might break out—guessing on the basis of our theoretical conviction that that revolution must take place—now we have a number of facts which show that the revolution is maturing in other countries and that the movement has begun *. That is why, in relation to Western Europe, in relation to the countries of the Entente, we have, or shall have, to repeat a good deal of what we did at the time of the Peace of Brest Litovsk. It will be much easier for us to do this now that we have the experience of Brest. When our Central Committee discussed the question of participating in a conference on the Prinkipo Islands together with the Whites—which in fact would have amounted to the annexation of all the territory the Whites occupied—the question of an armistice did not provoke a single indignant outcry among the proletariat, and that also was the attitude of our Party. At any rate, I have never heard of dissatisfaction or indignation from any quarter. The reason was that our lesson in international politics had borne fruit.

As to the petty bourgeois elements, the problem facing the Party has not yet been finally solved. In connection with a number of the questions, in fact all the questions without exception, figuring on the agenda, we have during the past year laid the foundation for a correct solution of this problem, particularly in relation to the middle peasant. We are theoretically agreed that the middle peasant is not our enemy, that he requires special treatment and that in his case the situation will vary in accordance with numerous accessory factors of the revolution, in particular, the answer to the question "for or against patriotism?" Such questions are for us of second rate importance, even of third rate importance, but they absolutely blind the petty bourgeoisie. On the other hand, all these elements waver in the struggle and become absolutely spineless. They do not know what they want and are incapable of defending their position. Here extremely pliant and extremely cautious tactics are demanded of us, for it is sometimes necessary to give with one hand and take away with the other. The blame for this lies not with us, but with the petty bourgeois elements, who are unable to make up their minds. We can see this in practice now: only today we read in the papers what the German Independents have begun to strive for, even though they have such powerful figures as Kautsky and Hilferding. You know that they wanted to embody the system of Soviets in the constitution of the German democratic republic, *i. e.*, to unite the Constituent Assembly and the dictatorship of the proletariat in lawful wedlock. * From our point of view this is such an outrage against common sense in our revolution, the German revolution, the Hungarian revolution and the growing Polish revolution, that all we can do is to shrug our shoulders. It must be said that such vacillating elements are to be found in the most advanced countries. Educated, informed, intelligent people, even in such an advanced capitalist country as Germany, at times act a hundred times more muddle-headedly and vociferously than our backward petty bourgeoisie. From this follows the lesson we in Russia must draw in relation to the petty bourgeois parties and the middle peasantry. Our task for a long time to come will be a complex and twofold one. These parties will for a long time to come inevitably take one step

forward and two steps back, because they are condemned to do so by their economic position and because they will come to support socialism not as the result of an absolute conviction of the worthlessness of the bourgeois system. Loyalty to socialism is something we cannot even ask of them. To count on their socialism would be absurd. They will support socialism only when they become convinced that there is no other way, when the bourgeoisie is finally defeated and smashed.

It is not possible for me to give a systematic summary of the experience of the past year. I glanced back on the past only from the point of view of what is required for our policy in the immediate future. The chief lesson is that we must be extremely cautious in our attitude towards the middle peasantry and the petty bourgeoisie. This is demanded by the experience of the past, it was shown in the example of the Peace of Brest Litovsk. We shall be called upon to make very frequent changes in our line of conduct, which to the casual observer may appear strange and incomprehensible. "How is that?" he will say. "Yesterday you were making promises to the petty bourgeoisie, while today Dzerzhinsky announces that the Left Socialist Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks will be placed against the wall. What an inconsistency!" Yes, it is inconsistent. But the petty bourgeois democrats are themselves inconsistent in their conduct, they do not know what seat to occupy, they try to sit between two stools, skip from one to the other and fall now to the right, now to the left. We have changed our tactics towards them, and every time they turn towards us we say "Welcome." We have not the slightest intention of expropriating the middle peasantry, we have not the slightest intention of applying force to the petty bourgeois democrats. We say to them "You are not a serious enemy. Our enemy is the bourgeoisie. But if you join forces with it, we shall be obliged to apply the measures of the proletarian dictatorship to you too."

I shall now pass to the questions of internal development and shall briefly dwell on what is chiefly characteristic of our political experience and summarise the political activities of the Central Committee during this period. The political activity of the Central Committee manifested itself in questions of tremendous importance

every day Were it not for the fact that we worked together so harmoniously, of which I have already spoken, we could not have acted as we did act, we could not have solved problems of urgent importance. As to the question of the Red Army which is now arousing so much discussion and to which a special point of the agenda of the congress is devoted, we adopted a host of small individual decisions proposed by the Central Committee of our Party and carried them through the Council of People's Commissars and the All Russian Central Executive Committee There was a still larger number of important individual assignments which each People's Commissar made at his own discretion, but which all systematically and consistently pursued one common line

The building up of a Red Army was an entirely new question, one which had never been treated even theoretically Marx at one time said that it is to the credit of the Paris Communards that they carried into effect decisions which were not borrowed from any previously held doctrines but which were dictated by actual necessity This statement of Marx's with regard to the Communards was to a certain extent ironical, because two tendencies prevailed in the Commune—the Blanquists and the Proudhonists—and both these tendencies found it necessary to act contrary to what their doctrines taught.* But we acted in accordance with what Marxism has taught us At the same time the political activities of the Central Committee in concrete cases were entirely determined by absolute, urgent and necessary demands We were frequently obliged to proceed gropingly This fact will be strongly emphasised by any historian capable of giving a detailed picture of the general activities of the Central Committee of the Party and of the Soviet government during this year This fact becomes all the more striking when we attempt to embrace the past at a single glance But this did not deter us in any way even on October 23 (10), 1917, when the question of the seizure of power was decided** We did not doubt that we should be called to experiment, as Comrade Trotsky puts it We have undertaken a task which nobody in the world has ever attempted on so large a scale

That is also true of the Red Army When, upon the conclusion of the war, the army began to disintegrate, many people

thought that this was a purely Russian phenomenon. But we see that the Russian revolution was in fact the dress rehearsal, or one of the rehearsals, for the world proletarian revolution. When we discussed the Peace of Brest Litovsk, when the question of peace arose in January 1918, we still did not know when the disintegration of the armies would commence, and in what other countries. We proceeded from experiment to experiment, we endeavoured to create a volunteer army, feeling our way, testing the ground and experimenting how the problem could be solved in the given situation. And the nature of the problem was clear. Unless we defended the socialist republic by force of arms, we could not exist. A ruling class will never surrender its power to an oppressed class. And the latter must prove in practice that it is capable not only of overthrowing the exploiters, but also of organising its self defence and of staking everything for that purpose. We have always said that there are wars and wars. We condemned the imperialist war, but we did not reject *war in general*. Those who attempted to accuse us of militarism got themselves hopelessly muddled. And when I had occasion to read the report on the Berne Conference of the yellow Socialists,* where Kautsky declared that what the Bolsheviks had was militarism and not socialism I smiled and shrugged my shoulders. As though history has ever known a big revolution that was not involved in war! Of course not. We are living not merely in a state, but in a *system of states*, and the existence of the Soviet Republic side by side with imperialist states for a long time is unthinkable. One or the other must triumph in the end. And before that end supervenes a series of frightful collisions between the Soviet Republic and the bourgeois states will be inevitable. That means that if the ruling class, the proletariat, wants to hold sway, it must prove its capacity to do so by its military organisation also. How was a class which had hitherto served as cannon fodder for the military commanders of the dominant imperialist class to create its own commanders? How was it to solve the problem of combining the enthusiasm and the new revolutionary creative spirit with the employment of the stock of bourgeois science and military technique in its worst form, without which it is incapable of master

ing the modern technique and the modern methods of conducting war?

Here we were faced with a problem which in the course of a year of experiment assumed a general form. When in the revolutionary programme of our Party we referred to the question of experts we were summarising the experience gained by our Party in this, one of the most important of questions¹. I do not recall that the old teachers of socialism, who foresaw a great deal of what would take place in the future socialist revolution and discerned many of its features, ever expressed themselves on this question. It did not exist for them, for it arose only when we proceeded to create a Red Army. That meant creating out of an oppressed class, which had been turned into cannon fodder, an army inspired by enthusiasm and compelling that army to make use of all that was most coercive and abhorrent in what we had inherited from capitalism.

This contradiction with which we were faced in connection with the Red Army applies to every field of our constructive work. Let us take the question which occupied us most of all, namely, the transition from workers' control of industry to workers' management of industry*. After the decrees and decisions of the Council of People's Commissars and the local organs of Soviet power—who all contributed to creating our political experience in this field—all that remained in fact for the Central Committee to do was to summarise. It could hardly lead in the true sense of the word in such a matter. One has only to recall how helpless, spontaneous and fortuitous were our first decrees and decisions on the subject of workers' control of industry. It seemed to us an easy thing. But in practice the situation was that while the need for building was evident, we entirely failed to answer the question of how to build. Every nationalised factory, every branch of nationalised industry, transport, and particularly railway transport—that vast manifestation of the capitalist mechanism, constructed in the most centralised way on the basis of large scale machinery, and most essential to the state—all this embodied the

¹ See note to p. 348 *—Ed.

concentrated experience of capitalism and occasioned us innumerable difficulties

Even now we are still far from having conquered these difficulties. We at first regarded these difficulties in an entirely abstract way, like revolutionaries who preached, but absolutely did not know how to set about the matter. Of course, there were a large number of people who accused us, and the Socialists and Social Democrats are accusing us to this day, of having taken this task upon ourselves and not knowing how to finish it. But these are ridiculous accusations by lifeless people. As though one can set about making a great revolution and know beforehand how it is to be completed. As though this knowledge can be derived from books. No, our decision could be born only from the experience of the masses. And I count it to our credit that amidst incredible difficulties we took upon ourselves the solution of a problem which until then was only half known to us, that we inspired the proletarian masses to work independently, that we achieved the nationalisation of industrial enterprises, and so forth. We recall that in the Smolny we passed as many as ten or twelve decrees at one session. That was a manifestation of our determination and our desire to arouse the spirit of experiment and independence of the proletarian masses. We now have the experience. We have now passed, or are about to pass, from workers' control to workers' management of industry. In place of our former absolute helplessness, we now have a number of lessons of experience, and, as far as it is possible, we have summarised that experience in our programme. We shall have occasion to deal with this in detail in connection with the question of organisation. We should have been unable to fulfil this task had we not had the assistance and collaboration of the comrades from the trade unions.

Matters are different in Western Europe. There the comrades regard the trade unions as an evil, since the trade unions have fallen so completely under the sway of the yellow representatives of the old kind of Socialism that the Communists can see little advantage to be gained from their support. Many representatives of West European communism, even Rosa Luxemburg, are demanding the dissolution of the trade unions.* That shows how

much more difficult our problem is in Western Europe. But in our country we could not have maintained ourselves a single month without the support of the trade unions. In this respect we have the experience gained in a vast amount of practical work, which will enable us to proceed to the solution of some of the most difficult problems.

Let us take the question of experts, a question which faces us at every turn, which arises in connection with every appointment and which the leaders of our industry and the Central Committee of the Party are continually coming up against. Under existing conditions the Central Committee of the Party cannot perform its work if it is to stick to forms. If it were impossible to appoint comrades who can work independently in their particular field, we should be unable to work at all. It was only thanks to the fact that we had such organisers as J. M. Sverdlov that we were able to work under war conditions without a single conflict of any note. And in this work we had unavoidably to resort to the assistance of people who offered us their services and who possessed knowledge acquired in former times.

Let us take in particular the administration of the War Department. That problem could not be solved without placing confidence in the general staff and in the big experts on organisation. There were differences of opinion among us on particular questions, but fundamentally there was no room for doubt. We resorted to the assistance of bourgeois experts who were imbued with the bourgeois psychology, who betrayed us and who will continue to betray us for many years to come. Nevertheless, the idea that we can build communism by the hands of pure Communists, without the assistance of bourgeois experts, is a childish idea. We have been steeled in the struggle, we have the forces and we are united, and we must carry on our work of organisation, making use of the knowledge and experience of the experts. This is an indispensable condition, without which socialism cannot be built. Socialism cannot be built unless advantage is taken of the heritage of capitalist culture. There is nothing communism can be built from except what has been left us by capitalism.

We must now build practically, and we have to create the com-

munist society with the hands of our enemies. This appears to be a contradiction, perhaps even an unsolvable contradiction. But, as a matter of fact the problem of building communism can be solved only in this way. And when we examine our experience, our daily confrontations with this question, when we examine the practical work performed by the Central Committee, it seems to me that in the main our Party has solved this problem. It entailed tremendous difficulties, but that is the only way the problem could have been solved. The bourgeois experts must be so encompassed by organised, creative and harmonious work that they will be compelled to fall in line with the proletariat no matter how much they resist and fight at every step. We must set them to work as a technical and cultural force in order to preserve them and in order to transform an uncultured and barbarian capitalist country into a cultured communist country. And it seems to me that during the past year we have learnt how to build, that we have entered the right path and shall not now be diverted from that path.

I should also like to deal briefly with the food question and the question of the countryside. Food has always been our most difficult problem. In a country where the proletariat was obliged to assume power with the aid of the peasantry, where it fell to the lot of the proletariat to serve as the agent of a petty bourgeois revolution, until the organisation of the Committees of Poor Peasants, *i.e.*, down to the summer and even the autumn of 1918, our revolution was to a large extent a *bourgeois* revolution*. We are not afraid to say that. We accomplished the October Revolution so easily because the peasantry as a whole supported us, because it was opposed to the landlords, because it saw that we would go the limit, since we were giving legal effect to what was printed in the Socialist Revolutionary newspapers, to what the cowardly petty bourgeoisie had promised but could not realise. But from the moment the Committees of Poor Peasants began to be organised, our revolution became a *proletarian* revolution. We were faced with a problem which we are still far from having solved, but it is extremely important that we have raised the problem practically. The Committees of Poor Peasants were a transitional

stage The first decree on the organisation of Committees of Poor Peasants was passed by the Soviet government at the instance of Comrade Tsurupa, who at that time was in charge of food affairs We had to save the non agricultural population, which was suffering from hunger That could be done only with the aid of Committees of Poor Peasants, as proletarian organisations And it was only when the October Revolution in the countryside began and was accomplished in the summer of 1918 that we found our real proletarian base, it was only then that our revolution *became a proletarian revolution in fact*, and not merely by virtue of proclamations, promises and declarations

We have not yet solved the problem facing our Party of creating the forms of organisation of the rural proletariat and semi proletariat I recently had occasion to visit Petrograd and to be present at the First Congress of Agricultural Workers of the Petrograd Gubernia I then saw how we were groping our way in our approach to this matter, but I think that progress will undoubtedly be made I should say that the principal lesson we learnt from the political leadership of this year was that we had to find organisational support in this field We took a step in this direction when we formed the Committees of Poor Peasants, held new elections to the Soviets and reconstructed our food policy, in which the difficulties encountered were immense It may be that in those outlying parts of Russia which are now becoming Soviet—the Ukraine and the Don—this policy will have to be modified It would be a mistake were we to stereotype the decrees for all parts of Russia, were the Bolshevik Communists, the Soviet workers in the Ukraine and the Don to extend these decrees to other regions wholesale without discrimination We shall encounter not a few peculiar situations, we shall not bind ourselves to uniform stereotypes, we shall not decide once and for all that our experience, the experience of Central Russia, can be transferred to every region wholesale We have only just addressed ourselves to the problems of real construction, we are only just taking the first steps in this direction—an immense field of work is opening before us

I have stated that the first decisive step taken by the Soviet government was to create the Committees of Poor Peasants This

step was taken by our food workers and was evoked by necessity. But in order to complete our task we require something more than temporary organisations like the Committees of Poor Peasants. Side by side with the Soviets we have the trade union organisations, which we are using as a school for training the backward masses. The stratum of workers who actually administered Russia during this year, who carried out the whole policy and who constituted our strength—this stratum in Russia is an incredibly thin one. We have become convinced of that, we are feeling it. If a future historian ever comes to collect information regarding the groups which administered Russia during these seventeen months, how many hundreds or how many thousands of individuals were engaged in this work and bore the whole incredible burden of administering the country—nobody will believe that this could have been accomplished by such an insignificant number of individuals. The number was so insignificant because there were so few intelligent, educated and capable political leaders in Russia. This stratum was a thin one in Russia, and in the course of the past struggle overexerted itself, overworked itself, did much more than its powers warranted. I think that at the present congress we shall seek practical means of utilising new forces on a mass scale in industry and—what is more important—in agriculture, enlisting in Soviet work workers and peasants who are on, or even below, the average level. Without their assistance on a mass scale it will, in our opinion, be impossible to carry on.

Since my time has almost expired, I want to say only a few words regarding our attitude towards the middle peasantry.

Our attitude towards the middle peasantry was in principle quite clear to us even before the revolution. The task that faced us was to *neutralise* the peasantry. At a meeting in Moscow where the question of our attitude towards petty bourgeois parties was discussed, I quoted the exact words of Engels, who not only pointed out that the middle peasantry was our ally, but also expressed the conviction that we should perhaps be able to manage without adopting repressive measures against the big peasant as well. * In Russia this expectation was not justified. We were, are and will be in a state of open civil war with the kulaks. That is

inevitable We have seen it in practice But, owing to the inexperience of Soviet workers and to the difficulties of the problem, the blows which were intended for the kulak very frequently fell on the middle peasantry Here we have sinned exceedingly [The experience we have gained in this respect will enable us to do everything to avoid this in the future That is the problem now facing us, and facing us not theoretically but practically You all know very well that the problem is a difficult one We have no benefits to offer the middle peasant, and he is a materialist, a practical man, who demands definite material benefits, which we are not now in a position to offer and without which the country will have to get along perhaps for many months of severe struggle, which is now promising to end in complete victory But there is a good deal we can do in our practical administrative work we can improve our administrative machinery and correct a host of abuses The line of our Party, which has not done enough towards arriving at a *bloc*, an alliance, an agreement with the middle peasantry, can and must be corrected

That in brief is all I am able to say at present regarding the economic and political work of the Central Committee during the past year I must now very briefly pass to the second part of the duty entrusted to me by the Central Committee—the organisational report of the Central Committee This duty could have been fulfilled in the way it deserves only by Jacob Mikhailovich Sverdlov, who was appointed to make the report on this question on behalf of the Central Committee He possessed a vast, an incredibly vast memory, in which he retained the greater part of his report, and his personal acquaintance with the work of organisation in the various localities would have enabled him to make this report I am unable to replace him even in one-hundredth part, for in this work we were obliged to rely, and had every justification for relying, on Comrade Sverdlov, who very frequently made decisions independently

I can here give you short excerpts from the written reports that are already available But the Secretariat of the Central Committee, which has been unable to complete its work, has most categorically promised that next week the written reports will be

ready for printing, that they will be printed on the multigraph and placed in the possession of the members of the congress. They will supplement the brief, fragmentary remarks which I can make here. In the material of the report available at present in written form, we find, first of all, figures relating to the number of incoming documents: 1,483 in December 1918, 1,537 in January 1919 and 1,840 in February. The proportionate distribution of these documents is given, but I will take the liberty of not reading this. Comrades who are interested will see from the report when distributed that, for instance, 490 persons called on the Secretariat in November. And the comrades who handed me the report say it can hardly embrace half of what the Secretariat dealt with, because dozens of delegates were received by Comrade Sverdlov daily and more than half of them were probably not Soviet officials but Party workers.

I must draw attention to the report on the activities of the Federation of Foreign Groups. I am acquainted with this field of work only to the extent that I have had the opportunity of briefly glancing through the material concerning the foreign groups. There were at first seven such groups, now there are nine. Comrades living in purely Great Russian districts, who have not had the opportunity of directly acquainting themselves with these groups and who have not seen the reports in the newspapers, will please read the excerpts from the newspapers, which I shall take the liberty of not reading in full. I should say that here we can observe the real foundations of what has been done in connection with the Third International. The Third International was founded in Moscow at a brief congress, a detailed report of which, as of everything proposed by the Central Committee on all questions concerning the International, will be made by Comrade Zinoviev. The fact that we succeeded in doing so much in so short a time at the congress of Communists in Moscow is due to the tremendous preparatory work performed by the Central Committee of our Party and by the organiser of the congress, Comrade Sverdlov. Propaganda and agitation were carried on among the foreigners in Russia and a number of foreign groups were organised. Dozens of the members of these groups were made fully acquainted with

the main plans and the general policy in its guiding lines Hundreds of thousands of war prisoners from armies which the imperialists had created solely in their own interests, upon returning to Hungary, Germany and Austria, completely infected these countries with the bacilli of Bolshevism And the fact that there are in these countries groups and parties that are solid with us is due to the work, not visible superficially, and treated summarily and briefly in the report on the organisational work of the foreign groups in Russia, which formed one of the most significant pages in the activities of the Russian Communist Party, as one of the nuclei of the world Communist Party

Further, the material handed to me contains data regarding the information reports received by the Central Committee, and the organisations from which they were received And here our Russian lack of organisation stands out in all its shameful wretchedness Reports were received regularly from the organisations in four gubernias, irregularly from fourteen gubernias and isolated reports from sixteen gubernias The gubernias in question are named in the list, which permit me not to read Of course, this absence of organisation, this extreme lack of organisation, is very largely to be explained by the conditions of civil war, but not entirely And it will not do to excuse and defend oneself on this plea Organisational activity was never a strong point with the Russians in general, nor with the Bolsheviks in particular Yet the chief problem of the proletarian revolution is *the problem of organisation* It is not without reason that the question of organisation is here assigned a most prominent place This is a thing we must fight for, and fight for with firmness and determination, using every means at our disposal We can do nothing here except by education and re-education This is a field in which revolutionary force and the dictatorship can be used only to be abused, and I make so bold as to warn you against such abuse Revolutionary force and the dictatorship are excellent things when they are applied in the right way and against the right people But they cannot be applied in the field of organisation We have not in any way solved this problem of education, re education and prolonged organisational work, and we must proceed to tackle it systematically

We have here a detailed financial report. Of the various items, the largest is in connection with workers' publications and newspapers 1,000,000, again 1,000,000 and again 1,000,000—3,000,000, Party organisations, 2,800,000, editorial expenses, 3,600,000. More detailed figures are contained in this report, which will be reproduced and distributed to the delegates. Meanwhile the comrades can get their information from the representatives of the groups. Permit me not to read these figures. The comrades who drew up the report gave in it what is most important and illustrative, *viz.*, the general results of the propaganda work performed in the sphere of publication. The Communist Publishing House put out sixty-two titles. The newspaper *Pravda* earned 2,000,000 in net profits in 1918 and issued during the year 25,000,000 copies. The newspaper *Byednota* earned a net profit of 2,370,000 and issued 33,000,000 copies. The comrades from the Organisational Bureau of the Central Committee have promised to rearrange the detailed figures they possess in such a way as to give at least two comparable dates. It will then be clear what vast educational work is being performed by the Party, which for the first time in history is using modern large-scale capitalist printing equipment in the interests of the workers and peasants and not in the interests of the bourgeoisie. We have been accused thousands and millions of times of having violated the freedom of the press and of having renounced democracy. Our accusers call it democracy when the capitalists can buy out the press and the rich can use the press in their own interests. We call that not democracy but plutocracy. Everything that bourgeois culture has created in order to deceive the people and defend the capitalists we have taken from them in order to satisfy the political requirements of the workers and the peasants. And in this respect we have done more than any Socialist party has done in a quarter of a century or in half a century. Nevertheless, we have done far too little in comparison with what should be done.

The last item handed to me by the bureau concerns circular letters. There were fourteen in all, and the comrades who are not acquainted with them or who are not sufficiently acquainted with them are invited to read them. Of course, the activities of the

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Central Committee in this respect were far from complete. But it must be borne in mind that when one has to work under the conditions in which we worked, when we were obliged to give political instructions on a number of questions every day, and only in exceptional, and indeed very rare instances were we able to do so through the Political Bureau or the Plenum of the Central Committee—to assume that under such conditions we could have frequently resorted to political circulars is out of the question.

I repeat, as a fighting organ of a fighting party, and in time of civil war, we cannot work in any other way. Otherwise it will be a half measure or a parliament—and in the era of dictatorship questions cannot be settled, nor can the Party or the Soviet organisation be directed, by means of a parliament. Comrades, in an era in which we have the advantage of the apparatus of bourgeois print shops and the bourgeois press, circular letters of the Central Committee lose some of their importance. We send out only such instructions as cannot be printed—for in our activities, which in spite of their vast dimensions were conducted openly, underground work nevertheless remained, still remains and will remain. We were not afraid of being rebuked for our underground methods and secrecy. Nay, we were proud of it. Since we found ourselves in a situation in which, having overthrown our bourgeoisie, we were faced with the hostility of the European bourgeoisie, secrecy remained a feature of our activities and underground methods a feature of our work.

With this, comrades, I conclude my report [*Applause*]

CLOSING SPEECH AT THE EIGHTH PARTY CONGRESS

March 23 1919¹

OUR agenda, comrades, is exhausted. Permit me to say a few words in connection with the conclusion of the work of the congress.

Comrades, it is not only because we have lost one of our best organisers and practical leaders, Jacob Mikhailovich Sverdlov, that the time at which we have met is a very difficult one. The time at which we have met is exceptionally difficult because international imperialism—and of this there is absolutely no doubt—is making a last and very strenuous effort to crush the Soviet Republic. There is no doubt in our minds that the intense attacks launched in the West and the East, accompanied as they are by a number of White Guard uprisings and attempts to destroy the railway line in several places, are plainly a deliberate measure of the imperialists of the Entente—a measure obviously decided on in Paris.* We all know, comrades, how difficult it was for Russia to be obliged after four years of imperialist war to take up arms against the imperialist plunderers in defence of the Soviet Republic. We all know how harassing that war is, how it is exhausting us. But we also know that this war is being fought with heightened energy and undaunted heroism solely because, for the first time in the history of the world, there has been created an army, an armed force, which knows what it is fighting for, and because, for the first time in the history of the world, workers and peasants, who are making incredible sacrifices, know that they are defending a Soviet socialist republic, the power of the toilers over the capitalists, that they are defending the cause of the world proletarian socialist revolution.

In spite of these difficult conditions we have succeeded in performing a great piece of work in a very short period of time. We

¹ See note to p. 26 * —Ed

have succeeded in endorsing our programme, and endorsing it unanimously—as has been the case with every vital decision of the congress. We are convinced that in spite of numerous literary and other defects it has already taken its place in the history of the Third International as a programme which summarises the results of a new stage in the world movement for the emancipation of the proletariat. We are convinced that in numerous countries, where we have far more allies and friends than we imagine, a mere translation of our programme will provide the most effective answer to the question as to what has been done by the Russian Communist Party, a party which represents one of the detachments of the world proletariat. Our programme will provide powerful material for propaganda and agitation, it is a document which will lead the workers to say “Here are our comrades, our brothers, here our common cause is being accomplished.”

Comrades, we have succeeded in passing a number of other important decisions at this congress. We have approved the creation of the Third, the Communist International, which was founded here in Moscow. We have come to a unanimous decision on the military question. Vast though the differences of opinion may have appeared at first, diverse though the views of many comrades who expressed themselves here with absolute frankness on the subject of the shortcomings of our military policy were, we found it extremely easy in the commission to come to an absolutely unanimous decision, and we shall leave this congress convinced that our chief defender, the Red Army, for the sake of which the whole country is making such incalculable sacrifices, will find in every member of the congress, in every member of the Party a warm and unselfishly devoted helper, leader, friend and collaborator.

Comrades, we solved the problems confronting us in the sphere of organisation so easily because the solutions were indicated by the whole history of the relations between the Party and the Soviets. All we were called upon to do was to summarise. On the subject of our work in the rural districts, the congress in a unanimous and rapidly taken decision laid down our policy on a question that is particularly important and particularly difficult, and one that in other countries is even regarded as unsolvable, *viz.*, the

attitude of the proletariat which has overthrown the bourgeoisie towards the vast millions of middle peasants. We are all convinced that this decision of the congress will help to consolidate our power. We are convinced that in the difficult period through which we are now passing, when the imperialists are making their final effort to overthrow the Soviet government by force, and when an acute dearth of food and the collapse of transport have once more rendered the position of thousands and millions of people desperate, the resolution we adopted and the spirit which animated the members of the congress will help us to bear these trials and to live through this difficult half year.

We are convinced that *this will be the last difficult half year*. We are particularly fortified in this conviction by the news we announced to the congress the other day—the news of the success of the proletarian revolution in Hungary.* While the Soviet government has hitherto been successful only within the country, among the peoples which once formed part of the old Russian Empire, and while short sighted people who found it particularly difficult to abandon routine and old habits of thought (even though they may have belonged to the camp of the Socialists) could hitherto think that it was only the peculiarities of Russia which called forth this unexpected swing towards proletarian Soviet democracy and that the peculiar features of this democracy perhaps reflected as in a distorting mirror the old peculiarities of tsarist Russia—while such an opinion could formerly have been held, it is now completely deprived of all foundation. Comrades, the news received today gives us a picture of the Hungarian revolution. We learn from today's news that the Allied powers presented a savage ultimatum to Hungary demanding the passage of their troops. The bourgeois government, seeing that the Allied powers wanted to bring their troops through Hungary, and realising that Hungary would again be subjected to the frightful sufferings of a new war—this government of bourgeois compromisers resigned voluntarily, voluntarily started negotiations with the Communists, our Hungarian comrades, who were in prison, and voluntarily admitted that there was no way out of the situation except by the transfer of power to the toiling people. [Applause]

If it was said of us that we were usurpers, if at the end of 1917 and the beginning of 1918 the bourgeoisie and many of its followers had no other words but "violence" and "usurpation" to describe our revolution, if even now we hear statements to the effect that the Bolshevik government is maintaining itself by force, the absurdity of which we have repeatedly demonstrated—if such absurdities could be uttered formerly, they have now been silenced by the example of Hungary. Even the bourgeoisie realised that there can be no power except that of the Soviets. The bourgeoisie of a more cultured country saw more clearly than did our bourgeoisie on the eve of November 7 (October 25) that the country was perishing and that trials of increasing severity would be imposed on the people, and that therefore the power of government must be in the hands of the Soviets, *i e.*, of the workers and peasants of Hungary, that a new, Soviet, proletarian democracy must save her.

The difficulties which face the Hungarian revolution, comrades, are enormous. This country is small compared with Russia, and can be stifled by the imperialists much more easily. But however great the difficulties which undoubtedly still face Hungary, here we have *our moral victory*, in addition to a victory for Soviet power. A most radical, democratic and compromising bourgeoisie realised that at a moment of extreme crisis, when a new war is menacing a country already exhausted by war, a Soviet government is a historical necessity, that in such a country there can be no government but Soviet government, a dictatorship of the proletariat.

Comrades, behind us there is a long line of revolutionaries who sacrificed their lives for the emancipation of Russia. The lot of the majority of these revolutionaries was a hard one. They suffered the persecution of the tsarist government, but it was not their good fortune to see the triumph of the revolution. A better fortune has fallen to our lot. Not only have we seen the triumph of our revolution, not only have we seen how it consolidated itself amidst unprecedented difficulties, created new forms of power and won the sympathy of the whole world, but we are also seeing the seed sown by the Russian revolution springing up in Europe. This inspires us with an absolute and unshakable conviction that no matter

how difficult the trials that may still befall us, and no matter how great the misfortunes that may be brought upon us by that dying beast, international imperialism, that beast will perish and socialism will triumph throughout the world [*Prolonged applause*]

I declare the Eighth Congress of the Russian Communist Party closed

REPORT DELIVERED AT THE SEVENTH ALL-RUSSIAN CON-
GRESS OF SOVIETS OF WORKERS', PEASANTS', RED
ARMY AND COSSACK DEPUTIES

ON BEHALF OF THE ALL-RUSSIAN CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMIT-
TEE AND THE COUNCIL OF PEOPLE'S COMMISSARS

*December 5, 1919 **

COMRADES in accordance with the decision of the presidium, I have to deliver to you a political report combined from the reports of the All Russian Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars. I trust that you do not expect me to enumerate the acts and administrative measures which we passed during the year under review. You are doubtless acquainted with them from the newspapers. Moreover, nearly all our Commissariats have published brief pamphlets which have been distributed to all the delegates at the congress and which report the principal activities of each Commissariat during the year under review. I should like to draw your attention to certain general conclusions which, in my opinion, may be derived from our past experience and which may serve as useful indications and material for the work which every comrade delegate will now be occupied with in his locality.

First of all, when speaking of the political results of our activities and the political lessons to be drawn from them, prime place must naturally be given to the foreign relations of the Soviet Republic.

We have always said, both before the October Revolution and during the October Revolution, that we regard ourselves, and can regard ourselves, only as one of the detachments of the world army of the proletariat, a detachment which, moreover, took up an advanced position not because of the development and training it

had received, but because of the unique conditions existing in Russia, and that, therefore, the victory of the socialist revolution may be regarded as final only when the proletariat has triumphed at least in several of the advanced countries. And it is in this respect that we experienced most difficulty.

The stake, if one may so express it, we placed on the international revolution has been fully justified, if regarded generally. But from the standpoint of rate of development, the period we have passed through has been an extremely difficult one. We learnt to our cost that the development of the revolution in the more advanced countries is much slower, much more difficult and much more complex. That should not astonish us, for it was naturally far easier for a country like Russia to begin the socialist revolution than it is for advanced countries. At any rate, this slower, more complex, more zigzag development of the socialist revolution in Western Europe has occasioned us incredible difficulties. And, first of all, one is inclined to ask. How can we explain the miracle that the Soviet power has managed to maintain itself for two years in a backward, impoverished and war weary country, in spite of the obstinate struggle waged against it first by German imperialism, which at that time was regarded as omnipotent, and then by the imperialism of the Entente, which a year ago settled accounts with Germany, knew no competitors and lorded it over every country of the world without exception. Regarded from the standpoint of a simple calculation of forces, of a calculation of military strength, that is indeed a miracle, for the Entente was, and is, immeasurably more powerful than we. Nevertheless, what more than anything else distinguishes the year under review is the fact that we gained a tremendous victory—a victory so great that one might perhaps without exaggeration say that our principal difficulties are already behind us. However great may be the dangers and difficulties that are still before us, the greatest are presumably already behind us. We must clearly understand the reason for this, and, what is most important, correctly define our policy in the future. For the future will undoubtedly see many attempts on the part of the Entente to repeat its intervention and there will probably again appear the old predatory alliance between the international

and the Russian capitalists for the restoration of the power of the landlords and capitalists and the overthrow of the Soviet power in Russia—in a word, an alliance the aim of which will be to extinguish the hearth of the world socialist conflagration which the R S F S R has become

When the history of the Entente intervention and the political lesson we received are regarded from this standpoint, I must point out that this history falls into three main stages, in each of which we secured a profound and lasting victory

The first stage, and the one that was naturally most accessible and easy for the Entente, was its attempt to destroy Soviet Russia by means of its own troops. Of course, after the Entente had defeated Germany it still had armies of millions of men at its disposal, armies that had not yet openly declared for peace and had not yet recovered from their scare of the bugbear of German imperialism with which they had been frightened in every Western country. Of course, at that time, from the military standpoint and the standpoint of foreign politics, it meant nothing for the Entente to take a tenth part of its armies and dispatch it to Russia. You must note that it had complete mastery over the seas, complete mastery over the navy. The transport of troops and supplies was entirely in its hands. Had the Entente, which hated us as only the bourgeoisie can hate a socialist revolution, in any way succeeded in throwing one tenth of its armies against us at that time, there is not the slightest doubt that the fate of Soviet Russia would have been sealed and the same lot would have befallen her as befell Hungary *

Why could not the Entente do this? It landed troops in Murmansk. The campaign in Siberia was undertaken with the aid of Entente troops, and Japanese troops are still occupying a remote part of Eastern Siberia, while the troops of all the states of the Entente were to be found, although not in large numbers, in every part of Western Siberia. Furthermore, French troops were landed in the South of Russia **. This was the first stage of the international interference in our affairs, the first attempt, so to speak, to throttle the Soviet power with the aid of troops which the Entente took from its own armies, i.e., the workers and peasants of

the more advanced countries. And these troops, moreover, were excellently equipped, and, generally, from the standpoint of the technical and material conditions of the campaign, there was no demand that the Entente was not in a position to satisfy. No obstacles hampered it. How then is one to explain the failure of this attempt? The end of it was that the Entente was obliged to withdraw its troops from Russia, because these troops proved unfit for a war against revolutionary Soviet Russia. That, comrades, has always been our chief and fundamental argument. We declared from the very beginning of the revolution that we were a party of the international proletariat, and that, no matter how great the difficulties of the revolution were, a time would come when at the most critical moment the sympathy and the solidarity of the workers oppressed by international imperialism would make themselves felt. For this we were accused of utopianism. But experience has shown that if we cannot always rely on action being taken by the proletariat, and if we cannot always rely on all the actions it takes, it may nevertheless be said that these two years of world history have proved that we were a thousand times right. The attempt of the British and French to throttle Soviet Russia with the aid of their own troops, an attempt which promised them certain and easy success in the shortest possible time, ended in failure: the British troops were withdrawn from Archangel, the French troops which had been landed in the South were sent back to their native country. And now we know—for in spite of the blockade, in spite of the ring surrounding us, news nevertheless is reaching us from Western Europe, we are receiving, although irregularly, copies of the British and French papers—we know that letters from British soldiers in the Archangel region nevertheless have reached England and have been published there. We know that the name of the French woman, Comrade Jeanne Labourbe, who came to work in a Communist spirit among the French workers and soldiers and was shot in Odessa, became known to the whole French proletariat, her name became a fighting slogan, a name around which the French workers, irrespective of the factional currents of syndicalism which appeared so difficult to overcome, all united in an attack on world imperialism. What Comrade Radek—who happily

so we are today informed has been released by Germany and whom perhaps we shall very soon see [*applause*]*—*what Comrade Radek once wrote, namely, that the soil of Russia, heated by the fire of revolution, will prove inaccessible to the troops of the Entente, what appeared a mere exaggeration of a publicist, has been faithfully borne out in practice. And, indeed, in spite of our backwardness, in spite of the difficulties accompanying our struggle, the workers and peasants of England and France have proved incapable of fighting us on our own soil. The result was in our favour. When they attempted to bring vast military forces against us—without which success was impossible—it led, thanks to a sure class instinct, to the fact that the French and British soldiers only carried away with them from Russia that canker of Bolshevism which the German imperialists were fighting when they expelled our ambassadors from Berlin. They thought to barricade themselves thereby against the canker of Bolshevism, which has now spread over the whole of Germany and strengthened the working class movement. The victory we gained in compelling the withdrawal of the British and French troops was the greatest victory we have gained over the Entente. We have deprived it of its soldiers. We replied to its immense military and technical superiority by depriving it of this superiority, thanks to the solidarity of the toilers against the imperialist governments.

And here was revealed how superficial and vague is the judgment formed of these pseudo democratic countries on the basis of the symptoms by which these countries are usually judged. There is a solid bourgeois majority in their parliaments. That is what they call "democracy." Capital dominates and stifles everything, to this day it resorts to a military censorship, and this they call "democracy." Among their millions of numbers of newspapers and magazines you will not find even an insignificant proportion which say anything even vaguely favouring the Bolsheviks. That is why they declared "We are safe from the Bolsheviks, there is order in our country." And this order they call "democracy." How is it then to be explained that a small number of British soldiers and French sailors could have compelled the withdrawal of the Entente troops from Russia? There is something wrong here. Presumably,

the masses of the people, even in England, France and America, are for us, presumably, all this top structure is a fraud, as the Socialists who refuse to betray socialism have always declared, presumably, bourgeois parliamentarism, bourgeois democracy and bourgeois freedom of the press mean freedom only for the capitalists, freedom to bribe public opinion, to exert pressure on it by all the weight of money. That is what the Socialists always said, until the imperialist war divided them into their separate national camps and transformed each national group of Socialists into the lackeys of their own bourgeoisie. That is what the Socialists said before the war, that is what the internationalists and Bolsheviks always said during the war. It all turned out to be true. All that top hamper, all that showy side, was a sheer fraud, which is becoming more and more apparent to the masses. They talk loudly about democracy, but they did not dare to announce in a single parliament in the world that they were declaring war on Soviet Russia. And so, in a number of bourgeois publications that reach us—French, British and American—we find the proposal: "The heads of the government must be impeached for having violated the constitution by waging war on Russia without having declared war." When, where in accordance with which paragraph of the constitution, by what parliament has it been sanctioned? Where have the representatives ever been assembled, even after the preliminary imprisonment of all the Bolsheviks and *bolchévistes*, as the French press puts it? Even under such conditions they could not announce in their parliaments that they were waging war on Russia. That is the reason why the troops of England and France, which were so magnificently armed and had never known defeat, were unable to smash us and withdrew from Archangel in the North and from the South.

That was our first and principal victory, because it was not only a military victory and not even a military victory at all, but a victory of the international solidarity of the toilers, for the sake of which we had started the whole revolution, and in reference to which we said that however much we might be called upon to bear, all our sacrifices would be compensated a hundredfold by the development of the inevitable international revolution. This was shown by the fact that in the field in which the coarsest material

factors are operative, the military field, we defeated the Entente by depriving it of its workers and peasants clad in soldier's uniform

This first victory was followed by the second stage in the interference of the Entente in our affairs. Every nation is headed by a group of politicians who possess excellent experience, and who therefore, having lost one card, put their stakes on another, taking advantage of their mastery of the world. There is not a single country, there is not a single corner of the globe left where British, French and American finance capital is not virtually in complete control. On this was based their new attempt, which was to compel the small states surrounding Russia, many of which had emancipated themselves and secured the possibility of declaring their independence only during the period of the war—Poland, Esthonia, Finland, Georgia, the Ukraine, etc.—to wage war on Russia with the assistance of British, French and American money.

You probably remember, comrades, the news that appeared in our newspapers regarding a speech made by the British Minister Churchill in which he declared that fourteen states would join the attack on Russia and that Petrograd would fall by September and Moscow by December. I have heard that Churchill subsequently denied this report,* but it was taken from the Swedish newspaper *Politiken* of August 28. But even if this source were to prove incorrect, we know very well that such indeed was the spirit of the activities of Churchill and the British imperialists. We know very well that every means of pressure was brought to bear on Finland, Esthonia and the other small countries to get them to wage war against Soviet Russia. I had occasion to read an editorial in the English newspaper *The Times*, the most influential bourgeois paper in England—an editorial written at the time when Yudenich's troops, which were known to have been supplied and equipped by the Entente and transported on Entente vessels, were stationed several miles from Petrograd and when Detskoye Selo was taken.¹ This article was a veritable campaign, in which every form of pressure was brought to bear—military, diplomatic and historical.

¹ Detskoye (formerly Tsarskoye) Selo, situated near Leningrad, was occupied by Yudenich's troops on December 21 1919 but on December 24 it was recaptured by the Red Army after a fierce fight.—*Ed*

British capital attacked Finland, to which it presented an ultimatum "The whole world has its eyes on Finland," said the British capitalists, "the whole fate of Finland will depend on whether she understands her mission and whether she will help to stem the filthy, muddy and bloody tide of Bolshevism and liberate Russia." And in return for this great and moral cause, for this noble and civilised cause, Finland was promised so many million pounds sterling, some piece of land or other, certain benefits or other. And what was the result? It was a time when Yudenich's troops were only a few miles from Petrograd and when Denikin had advanced north of Orel, when, had they received the slightest assistance, the fate of Petrograd would have been decided in favour of our enemies in the briefest possible time and with insignificant sacrifices.

The Entente brought all its weight to bear on Finland, and Finland was up to her ears in debt to the Entente. Not only was she in debt, but she could not exist for a single month without the support of those countries. How are we to explain the "miracle" the fact that we won the contest against such opponents? And win we did. Finland did not go to war, Yudenich was beaten, and Denikin was beaten, and this at a moment when, had they acted in concert, the struggle would have been settled in favour of international capitalism in the surest and quickest manner. We won the contest against international imperialism in this most serious and desperate of trials. How did we win? How could such a "miracle" have happened? The reason was that the Entente played the cards which all capitalist states play, acting entirely and exclusively by means of deceit and pressure, with the result that every action it took aroused a counteraction, so that the advantage was in our favour. We were badly armed, we were exhausted, and we said to the Finnish workers who had been crushed by the Finnish bourgeoisie "You must not fight us." The Entente had all the power of its armaments, its external might, all the food advantages it was in a position to offer these countries, and it demanded that they should wage war on us. We won that contest. We won, because the Entente no longer had troops of its own to fling against us and was obliged to resort to the forces of the small nationalities. And the small nationalities—not only the workers and peasants, but even

a fairly large section of the bourgeoisie, which had suppressed the working class—when they heard talk about democracy and independence, thought (from our standpoint it may appear foolish, but a man's folly can be revealed to him only by his own experience), they had the insolence—insolence from the point of view of the Entente, but stupidity from our point of view—to take these promises seriously and to think that independence really meant independence and not a means of enriching the French and British capitalists. They thought democracy meant living in freedom, and not that every American billionaire might plunder their country and every noble blooded officer might behave like a boor and become an impudent profiteer ready to do any dirty job for a few hundred per cent profit. That was the reason for our victory. When the Entente brought pressure to bear on the small countries, on each of these fourteen countries it met with resistance. The Finnish bourgeoisie, which has stifled thousands of Finnish workers during the White terror and knows that it will never be forgiven for having done so, and that it is no longer backed by the German bayonets which enabled it to do so—this Finnish bourgeoisie hates the Bolsheviks with all the vehemence with which a plunderer hates the workers who have thrown him off. Nevertheless, the Finnish bourgeoisie said to itself "If we follow the instructions of the Entente it means losing absolutely all hope of independence." And this independence had been granted them by the Bolsheviks in November (October) 1917, when there was a bourgeois government in Finland. And so, wide circles of the Finnish bourgeoisie wavered. We won the contest against the Entente because the latter counted upon the small nations and at the same time repelled them.

Thus experience has confirmed on a vast, on a historic scale what we have always said. There are two forces on earth that can determine the fate of mankind. One force is international capitalism, and should it be victorious it will reveal its power in endless brutalities, as is shown by the history of development of every small nation. The other force is the international proletariat which is fighting for the socialist revolution with the aid of the dictatorship of the proletariat which it calls the democracy of the workers,

We were disbelieved both by the vacillating elements in Russia and by the bourgeoisie of the small countries, they called us utopians and robbers, and even worse, for there is no accusation, however absurd and monstrous, which was not levelled against us. And when part of this bourgeoisie both the petty bourgeoisie and the middle bourgeoisie, was directly faced with the question whether to follow the Entente and help it to throttle the Bolsheviks, or help the Bolsheviks by remaining neutral—it turned out that we had won the contest and secured neutrality, although we had no treaties whereas England, France and America had all sorts of promissory notes and all sorts of treaties. The small countries acted as we wanted them to act not because the Polish, Finnish, Lithuanian and Latvian bourgeoisie found any satisfaction in conducting their policy to the advantage of the Bolsheviks—that of course is nonsense—but because we were right in our definition of the historical and world forces, namely, that either bestial capital would triumph in which case, no matter how democratic the republic, it would stifle every small nation in the world, or the dictatorship of the proletariat would triumph which was the only hope for the toilers and for all small, downtrodden and weak nations. We proved to be right not only in the theory, but also in the practice of world politics. When this contest for the troops of Finland and Lithuania was forced on us, we won it, although they could have crushed us with the most insignificant forces. In spite of the fact that the Entente threw everything on to the scales—its vast financial pressure, military power and supplies of food—in order to compel Finland to act, we nevertheless won the contest.

This, comrades, was the second stage of the international interference, it was our second historic triumph. In the first place, we deprived England, France and America of their workers and peasants. Their troops proved incapable of fighting us. In the second place, we deprived them of these small countries, which are all against us and in every one of which a bourgeois government and not a Soviet government rules. They maintained an attitude of benevolent neutrality towards us, thereby going against the all-powerful Entente, for the Entente was a beast of prey which wanted to destroy them.

Here we had occurring on an international scale what had occurred in the case of the Siberian peasant who believed in the Constituent Assembly and helped the Socialist Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks to join forces with Kolchak and smash us. But when he came to feel that Kolchak was the representative of the dictatorship, the exploiting and predatory dictatorship of the landlords and capitalists, a dictatorship worse than the dictatorship of the tsars, he organised the series of powerful revolts in Siberia of which we are obtaining precise reports from our comrades, and which now guarantee the complete return to us of Siberia, this time a deliberate return. What had taken place in the case of the Siberian muzhik, in spite of his backwardness and political ignorance, now took place on a much larger scale, a historic scale, in the case of the small nationalities. They hated the Bolsheviks, certain of them had crushed the Bolsheviks with a bloody hand, by means of a savage White terror. But when they saw the "liberators," the British officers, they came to realise what British and American "democracy" means. When the representatives of the British and American bourgeoisie appeared in Finland and Esthonia they began their throttling work with an insolence exceeding that of the Russian imperialists, because the Russian imperialists were representatives of olden days and did not know how to throttle as it should be done, whereas these people know how to throttle and do it thoroughly.

That is why our victory in the second stage is much more stable than at present appears. I am in no way exaggerating and I regard exaggeration as extremely dangerous. I have not the slightest doubt that further attempts will be made to hound now one and now another of the small border states against us. These attempts will be made because the small states are entirely dependent on the Entente and because all this talk of freedom, independence and democracy is sheer hypocrisy. The Entente can compel them to take up arms against us once more. But if such an attempt failed at so convenient a time, when it would have been so easy to wage war on us, it seems to me that it can definitely be said that in this respect the greatest difficulties are already over. This we are entitled to say without the slightest exaggeration,

even though we realise that the vast superiority of forces is on the side of the Entente. Our triumph is a durable one. Attempts will be made, but we shall defeat them much more easily, because, in spite of their bourgeois system, the small states have become convinced by experience, not by theory—these gentlemen are not much use as far as theory is concerned—that the Entente is a more insolent and rapacious beast than the Bolsheviks appear to them to be—the Bolsheviks, with whom children and civilised citizens are frightened all over Europe.

But our successes did not stop there. In the first place, we deprived the Entente of its workers and peasants, in the second place, we secured the neutrality of the small nationalities, which are the slaves of the Entente, and thirdly, within the Entente countries themselves we have begun to deprive the Entente of the petty bourgeoisie and the educated middle classes which used to be entirely hostile to us. In order to show this, I will take the liberty of referring to *l'Humanité*¹ of October 26, which I have in my hand. This paper, which has always belonged to the Second International, was rabidly chauvinistic during the war. It shared the standpoint of such Socialists as our Mensheviks and Right Socialist Revolutionaries, and to this day plays the part of a mediator. It declares that it is convinced that the state of mind of the workers has undergone a change. It was not in Odessa that it saw this, but on the streets and at meetings in Paris at which the workers refused to give a hearing to anybody who dared to utter a single word against Bolshevik Russia. And as politicians who have learnt something in the course of several revolutions, as people who know what the masses of the people represent, they dare not even whisper in favour of intervention and all declare themselves hostile to intervention. But that is not all. Apart from the fact that such statements are made by Socialists (they call themselves Socialists although we have long known what sort of Socialists they are), in this same issue of *l'Humanité* of October 26 from which I am quoting there is a declaration by a number of rep-

¹ From 1904 to 1920 *l'Humanité* was the central organ of the French Socialist Party, which was affiliated to the Second International. Since 1920 this paper has been the central organ of the French Communist Party.—Ed

representatives of the French intelligentsia and of French public opinion. In this declaration, the signatures to which are headed by that of Anatole France and include that of Ferdinand Buisson, I counted seventy one names of representatives of the bourgeois intelligentsia known to the whole of France. These people declare that they are opposed to interference in the affairs of Russia, because the blockade, the resort to killing by starvation, from which children and old people are perishing, is an outrage to culture and civilisation, and that they cannot tolerate it. And the well known French historian Aulard, who is thoroughly imbued with the bourgeois outlook, says in a letter

"As a Frenchman I am an enemy of the Bolsheviks, as a Frenchman, I am a supporter of democracy, and it would be ridiculous to suspect me of the contrary. But when I read that France is inviting Germany to take part in the blockade of Russia, when I read that France has addressed such a proposal to Germany a blush of shame mounts my cheeks."

This is perhaps merely a verbal expression of feeling on the part of a representative of the intelligentsia, but it may be said that this is our third victory over imperialist France, a victory won on French territory. That is what is shown by this declaration, a faltering and pitiful declaration in itself, a declaration of the intelligentsia, who, as we have seen in tens and hundreds of instances, can make a million times more noise than their strength warrants, but who possess the quality of being a good barometer and of indicating whether the petty bourgeoisie is tending whether thoroughly bourgeois public opinion is tending. If we have achieved such results within France herself, where every bourgeois newspaper writes of us only in the most mendacious terms, we can say to ourselves that a second Dreyfus case is starting in France, only on a much larger scale. At that time the bourgeois intelligentsia fought clericalism and the military reaction, the working class of that time could not regard this as its cause. At that time there did not exist the objective conditions and the profound revolutionary sentiment which exist now. But now? If, after the recent victory at the polls of the most rabid reaction,* and under the regime which is now being applied towards the Bolsheviks, the French bourgeois intellectuals declare that they are ashamed of the alliance between

ultra reactionary France and ultra reactionary Germany for the purpose of starving out the workers and peasants of Russia, we may say to ourselves, comrades, that this is a third victory, a great victory. And I should like to see how, with such a situation within their states, Messrs. Clemenceau, Lloyd George and Wilson will carry out the plan for a new attack on Russia which they are meditating. Try it, gentlemen! [*Applause*]

Comrades, I repeat, it would be a great mistake to be too incautious in the conclusions to be drawn from this. They will renew their attempts, of that there can be no doubt. But we are absolutely convinced that however great the forces with which these attempts are undertaken they will fail. We may say that the civil war we waged at the cost of such infinite sacrifice has been successful. It has been successful not only in Russia, but also on a world wide historical scale. Every one of the conclusions I have here drawn was based on the results of the military campaign. That is why, I repeat, every fresh attempt will be doomed to failure. For they are now much weaker than before, while we have become much stronger after our victories over Kolchak and Yudenich and the victory over Denikin which has already begun and which apparently will end in complete victory. Was not Kolchak supported by the all powerful Entente? Did not the peasants of the Urals and Siberia, who cast the least number of votes for the Bolsheviks in the elections to the Constituent Assembly, solidly support the front of the Constituent Assembly, which at that time was the front of the Mènsheviks and the Socialist Revolutionaries? Were they not the best of the human material opposed to the Communists? Was not Siberia a country where large landlordism had never been known and where we were unable to lend immediate aid to the peasant masses as we were to the peasants of Russia proper? What did Kolchak lack in order to gain a victory over us? He lacked what all imperialists lack: he remained an exploiter, he was obliged to act amidst the heritage of the World War, which permitted him only to talk of democracy and freedom, whereas all that was possible was one of two dictatorships: either the dictatorship of the exploiters, who savagely defend their privileges and who declare that they must be paid

tribute on the promissory notes by means of which they want to extort billions from the people, or the dictatorship of the workers, which is fighting the power of the capitalists and desires to consolidate the power of the toilers. It was thus alone that caused Kolchak's collapse. It was in this way, not by the ballot—which, of course, under certain circumstances is not a bad way—but by action that the peasant of Siberia and the Urals determined his lot. In the summer of 1918 he was dissatisfied with the Bolsheviks. When he saw that the Bolsheviks were compelling the surrender of surplus grain at a non-profiteering price, he went over to Kolchak. Now he has seen and compared, and has come to a different conclusion. He has come to understand that, despite all the science preached him, because he learnt from his own painful experience what many Socialist Revolutionaries and Mensheviks refuse to learn from science [*applause*], namely, that there can only be two dictatorships, that one must choose either the dictatorship of the workers—and that means helping all the toilers to throw off the yoke of the exploiters—or the dictatorship of the exploiters. We have won over the peasant, we have shown in practice—a most painful practice, one accompanied by incredible difficulties—that we, the representatives of the working class, are able to lead the peasantry much better and with greater success than any other party. Other parties love to accuse us of waging war on the peasants and of not being able to conclude a proper agreement with them, and they all offer us their noble and well-intentioned services to reconcile us with the peasants. We must humbly thank you, gentlemen, but we do not think you can do it. And we, at least, have long ago shown that we can do it. We did not draw charming pictures for the peasant, we did not say that he could emerge from capitalist society without iron discipline and without the firm power of the working class, we did not say that a mere accumulation of ballots can solve the historic question of the struggle against capital. We said bluntly that dictatorship was a harsh word, a painful word, a bloody word, but we said that the dictatorship of the workers would secure him the removal of the yoke of the exploiters—and we proved to be right. The peasant, having experienced both dictatorships in practice, has

chosen the dictatorship of the working class, and will follow it until complete victory is achieved [Applause]

Comrades, it follows from what I have said about our foreign successes—and I think I need not dwell on this very much—that we must repeat our proposal for peace in the calmest and most businesslike manner. We must do so because we have made this proposal frequently. And every time we did so we gained in the eyes of every educated person, even if he was our enemy, and a blush of shame would mantle his cheeks. That was the case when Bullitt came here, when he was received by Comrade Chicherin, talked to him and to me, and when in the course of a few hours we concluded a preliminary peace treaty.* And he assured us (those gentlemen love to brag) that America was everything—and who reckoned with France in view of the might of America? And when we had signed that treaty the French and British Ministers made this kind of gesture [*Lenin makes an expressive movement of the foot* Laughter] Bullitt was left with a scrap of paper. He was told “Who could have thought you so naive, so foolish as to believe in the democracy of England and France?” And as a result, I read in this same number the full text of the treaty with Bullitt in French [Applause] And it has been printed in all English and American papers. As a result, they have exposed themselves to the whole world as either rogues or infants—let them choose! And the sympathies of everybody, even of the middle classes, even of the educated bourgeois who remember that at one time they fought their own tsars and kings, are on our side, for we signed most onerous terms of peace in a most businesslike manner, and said “The blood of our workers and soldiers is too dear a price to pay, we shall pay you, like the merchants you are, a heavy tribute as the price of peace, we consent to pay a heavy tribute in order to save the lives of our workers and peasants.” I therefore think that much argument is not needed, and at the end of my speech I shall read the draft of the resolution which, on behalf of the Congress of Soviets, will express our unswerving desire to pursue a policy of peace [Applause]

I should now like to pass from the international and military part of my report to the political part

We have gained three huge successes over the Entente, but they were far from being merely military successes. They were successes gained by the dictatorship of the working class, and each of these successes strengthened our position. And not only because our enemy grew weaker and lost his troops, our international position was strengthened because we gained in the eyes of toiling humanity and even in the eyes of many members of the bourgeoisie. And in this respect the victories we gained over Kolchak and Yudenich and are now gaining over Denikin will enable us in future to continue winning sympathy by peaceful means, and much more than before.

We have always been accused of terrorism. It is a current accusation and never leaves the pages of the press. We are accused of having established terrorism as a principle. To this we reply "You yourselves do not believe this slander." This same historian, Aulard, who wrote the letter to *l'Humanite*, writes

'I have studied history and when I read that the Bolsheviks consist entirely of freaks, monsters, and bogies, I say that the same was said of Robespierre and Danton. I do not mean to compare the present Russians with these great men. There is no similarity, not the slightest similarity. But as a historian I say that one cannot believe every rumour.'

When a bourgeois historian begins to talk in this fashion we realise that the lies spread about us are beginning to lose their effect. We say that the terror was forced on us. They forget that terrorism was provoked by the attacks of the all powerful Entente. Is it not terrorism when an international fleet blockades a starving country? Is it not terrorism when foreign representatives relying on alleged diplomatic immunity, organise White Guard rebellions? After all, one must regard things soberly. One must realise that international imperialism has staked everything to crush the revolution, it stops at nothing and says "One Communist for every officer, and we shall win!" And they are right. If we had tried to influence these troops, created by the international plunderers and brutalised by war, if we had tried to sway them by words and arguments, if we had tried to sway them by anything but terror, we would not have held out even for two months, we would have been fools. The terror was forced on us

by the terrorism of the Entente, by the terrorism of all powerful capitalism, which stifled and is stifling workers and peasants and is condemning them to starvation solely for the reason that they are fighting for the freedom of their country. And every step in our success over this prime cause of the terror will inevitably mean that we shall be able in our administrative work to forego this method of conviction and persuasion.

What we say of terrorism applies also to our attitude towards the vacillating elements. We are accused of having created incredibly difficult conditions for the middle classes, the bourgeois intellectuals. We say that the imperialist war was a continuation of the imperialist policy and therefore led to revolution. During the imperialist war everybody felt that it was being waged by the bourgeoisie on behalf of its own rapacious interests, that while the people were perishing in the war the bourgeoisie was piling up wealth. That is its fundamental motive, the motive that inspires its policy in every country, and that is what is ruining it and will ruin it completely. But our war is a continuation of the policy of the revolution, and every worker and peasant knows—and if he does not know it he instinctively feels and sees it—that this war is being waged as a defence against the exploiters, that it is a war which is imposing burdens most of all on the workers and peasants, but which will stop at nothing to transfer those burdens to other classes. We know that it is much more difficult for them than for the workers and peasants because they belonged to a privileged class. But we assert that when it is a matter of liberating millions of toilers from exploitation, a government which would hesitate to lay the burden of sacrifice on other classes would be not a socialist government, but a government of traitors. We are laying the burden on the middle classes because the governments of the Entente have placed us in an incredibly difficult situation. And—as we see from the experience of our revolution, although I cannot dwell on it now—every stage in our victory is accompanied by the fact that, in spite of all their waverings and innumerable attempts to turn back, larger and larger numbers of representatives of the vacillating elements are becoming convinced that there is indeed no choice except between a dictatorship

of the toilers and the power of the exploiters. If times have been difficult for these elements, it is not the Bolshevik government that is to blame, but the White Guards and the Entente. And a victory over them will be a real and durable condition for the improvement of the position of these classes. In this connection, comrades, in passing to the lessons of our political experience within the country, I should like to say a few words about the significance of the war.

Our war is a continuation of the policy of the revolution, of the policy of overthrowing the exploiters, the capitalists and the landlords. That is why our war, unutterably difficult though it may be, is earning us the sympathies of the workers and peasants. War is not only a continuation of politics but also a summation of politics, it is an education in politics in this incredibly difficult war which has been forced on us by the landlords and capitalists with the aid of the all powerful Entente. The workers and peasants have learnt much in the fire of war. The workers have learnt how to use the power of the state and how to make every step a source of propaganda and education, they have learnt how to make the Red Army, the majority of which is composed of peasants, an instrument for the enlightenment of the peasantry and how to make the Red Army an instrument for using the bourgeois experts. We know that the vast majority of these bourgeois experts are, and are bound to be, opposed to us, for here their nature makes itself felt. We must not cherish any illusions on this score. Hundreds and thousands of these experts betrayed us. But tens of thousands of them served us ever more faithfully, because they were won over to our side in the course of the struggle itself, and because the revolutionary enthusiasm which has performed miracles in the Red Army arose from the fact that we served and satisfied the interests of the workers and peasants. The fact that the workers and peasants, knowing what they are fighting for, are harmoniously collaborating did its work, so that larger and larger numbers of people who came over to us from the other camp have sometimes unwittingly become transformed and are becoming transformed into our witting supporters.

Comrades, the task which now faces us is to transfer the ex

perience we acquired in our military operations to the field of peaceful construction. Nothing fills us with greater joy in welcoming the Seventh All Russian Congress of Soviets as the turning point in the history of Soviet Russia than the fact that the principal phase of civil war is now behind us, while before us lies the principal phase of peaceful construction, which is attracting all of us, which we desire to undertake, which we must undertake, and to which we shall devote our efforts and our lives. We are now in a position to say, on the basis of the painful experiences of the war, that in the principal sphere—the military and foreign sphere—we have proved to be the victors. The path of peaceful construction is opening before us. We must, of course, remember that the enemy is watching us at every step and will make numerous attempts to overthrow us, using every method at his disposal—violence, fraud, bribery, conspiracy, etc. Our task now is to direct the whole experience gained in military affairs to the solution of the principal problems of peaceful construction. I shall name these principal problems. First of all, there is the food problem, the problem of bread.

We conducted a strenuous fight against prejudice and habit. On the one hand, the peasant is a toiler, who has experienced the yoke of the landlord and the capitalist for decades, and knows with the instinct of an oppressed man that they are cruel beasts who will not hesitate to shed oceans of blood in order to recover their power. But, on the other hand, the peasant is a property owner. He desires to sell his grain freely, he wants "free trade." He does not understand that freedom to sell grain in a starving country means freedom to profiteer, that it means the freedom of the rich to pile up wealth. And we say that we will never consent to this, that we will rather lay down our lives than give way on this point.

We know that we are here pursuing a policy which lies in the workers persuading the peasants to give their grain in the form of a loan, since paper money is not the equivalent of, has not the same value as grain. The peasant lets us have his grain at fixed prices, and receives not goods, for we have no goods, but slips of coloured paper in return. He gives his grain as a loan and we say to him

"If you are a man of toil, can you deny that this is just? How can you fail to agree that those who have surpluses of grain must loan them at fixed prices, and not dispose of them by profiteering, for profiteering is a return to capitalism, a return to exploitation, a return to all we are fighting against?" That is an immense difficulty, it was marked by great vacillation. There are many steps we have taken and are taking gropingly, but we have gained our fundamental experience. When you hear the report of Comrade Tsurupa, or of other food workers, you will see that when the state says to the peasants that they must give their grain as a loan, they are growing used to the food requisitions, you will see that we have information from a number of volosts¹ that the food requisitions have been fulfilled one hundred per cent, that, insignificant as our successes are, nevertheless there are successes, and that our food policy is enabling the peasant to understand ever more clearly that if he wants freedom to trade in grain in an impoverished country he must go back and try Kolchak and Denikin. We shall resist that to the last drop of blood. There can be no compromise here. On this fundamental question, the question of grain, we shall see to it that there shall be no profiteering, that the sale of grain shall not enrich the wealthy, and that all surpluses of grain obtained on state land by the efforts of generations of toilers shall be the property of the state, that now, when the state is impoverished, surpluses of grain shall be supplied by the peasants to the workers' state in the form of a loan. If the peasant does this, we shall emerge from all our difficulties, we shall restore industry, and the worker will repay his debt to the peasant a hundredfold. He will ensure the peasant and his children the possibility of existing without working for the landlord and the capitalist. That is what we are telling the peasant, and he is becoming convinced that there is no other alternative. The peasant is being convinced of this not so much by us as by those gentlemen, our opponents, Kolchak and Denikin. They are giving the peasant practical lessons in life and are sending him over to our side.

But, comrades, after the problem of bread there comes another

¹ Volost—a rural district.—Ed Eng ed

problem, the problem of fuel. In those places where grain is being collected, enough has already been procured to feed the hungry workers of Petrograd and Moscow. But if you go through the working class quarters of Moscow you will find dreadful cold, dreadful hardships, which have now been accentuated by the fuel problem. Here we are passing through a desperate crisis, here we are behind the demand. A number of recent meetings of the Council of Defence and the Council of People's Commissars were entirely devoted to working out measures for solving the fuel crisis. Comrade Ksandrov has provided material for my speech which shows that we have begun to emerge from this desperate crisis. In the beginning of October, 16,000 cars were loaded in one week, whereas at the end of November the figure had fallen to 10,000 cars per week. That was a crisis, it was a catastrophe, it meant starvation for the workers of a number of mills and factories in Moscow, Petrograd and many other places. We are feeling the effects of the catastrophe to this very day. We then tackled the problem, we mobilised all our forces, and did what we had done in the military field. We said that every class conscious person must be mobilised for the solution of the fuel problem, that this problem must be solved not in the old way of capitalism, when the profiteers were rewarded and grew rich in this business by obtaining orders. No, we said, solve the problem in the socialist way, the way of self sacrifice, solve it in the way we saved Red Petrograd and liberated Siberia, the way in which we triumphed in all times of difficulty, the way we adopted in solving all difficult problems of the revolution, and the way in which we shall always triumph. And this last week loadings increased from 12,000 cars to 20,000 cars. We are emerging from this catastrophe, but we are still a long way from having completely emerged. Every worker must know and remember that without food for people and food for industry, i.e., fuel, the country is doomed to disaster. And this applies not only to our country. The newspapers report today that in France, a victor country, the railroads are coming to a standstill. What then can be said of Russia? France will emerge from her crisis by capitalist means, which imply profit for the capitalists and continued penury for the masses.

Soviet Russia will emerge from the crisis by the discipline and self-sacrifice of the workers, by a firm attitude towards the peasants, the attitude which the peasant in the long run always understands. The peasant will learn by experience that however hard the transition may be, and however firm the hand of the state power of the workers, it is the hand of the toiler who is fighting for the union of the toiling masses and for the complete abolition of all forms of exploitation.

A third scourge is menacing us—lice, typhus¹ It is mowing down our troops. And here, comrades, we cannot imagine the horrors that have overtaken the localities infested by typhus. The population is helpless, enfeebled and bereft of material resources. All life, all public activity, is coming to a standstill. We say "Comrades, all our attention must be devoted to this problem. Either the lice triumph over socialism, or socialism will triumph over the lice!" And in this question too, comrades, using the same methods we are beginning to achieve successful results. Of course, there still are doctors who regard the workers' government with bias and suspicion and prefer to take fees from the rich rather than wage the arduous fight against typhus. But they are the minority and are growing steadily fewer. The majority see that the nation is fighting for its existence, they see that its struggle is devoted to solving the main problem in the salvation of all culture. And these doctors are bringing to this painful and difficult cause a spirit of self sacrifice not second to that of any military expert. They are prepared to devote their strength to the toilers. I must say that we are beginning to emerge from this crisis as well. Comrade Semashko has given me some data on the work being done in this sphere. According to information received from the front, 122 doctors and 467 dressers had arrived there on October 1, while 150 more doctors have been dispatched from Moscow. We have grounds for believing that by December 15 the front will receive another 800 doctors, who will assist in combating typhus. We must devote great attention to this scourge.

Our main attention must be devoted to consolidating this

¹ See note to p. 22 **—Ed

foundation—grain, fuel and the fight against typhus Comrades, I have felt it all the more necessary to speak of this because a certain diffusion of effort has been observable in our socialist construction That is easily understood When people have determined to remould the whole world, it is natural that inexperienced workers and inexperienced peasants should become drawn into the work There can be no doubt that much time will elapse before we shall be able correctly to determine what to devote our attention to most It is not surprising that such great historical tasks are productive of great conceptions, but side by side with such great conceptions we frequently find petty and wretched conceptions There have been many cases when we began to build from the roof, from a wing or a cornice, while the foundation did not receive proper attention I should like to tell you, as the result of my experience, my observations on work performed, my opinion that the most urgent task of our policy must be to provide that foundation Every worker, every organisation and every institution must speak of this at every meeting If we can supply bread, if we succeed in increasing the quantity of fuel, if we bend every effort to wipe typhus—that product of lack of culture, that product of poverty, darkness and ignorance—from the Russian soil, if we devote all the strength and experience we gained in the bloody war to this bloodless war, we may be assured that in this cause, which after all is much easier and more humane than war, we shall gain ever greater and greater success.

We carried out the military mobilisation Parties which were our most irreconcilable enemies, which defended and are still defending the ideas of capitalism, as, for instance, the Socialist Revolutionaries, were obliged to admit, in spite of the accusations hurled at us by the bourgeois imperialists, that the Red Army has become an army of the people That means that in this most difficult of spheres we have achieved a union between the working class and the vast mass of the peasantry, who are coming over to the side of the working class, thereby showing the peasantry what the leadership of the working class means

The words "dictatorship of the proletariat" frighten the peasants In Russia they are a bugbear to the peasants The latter

turn against those who use this bugbear. But the peasants now know that although the dictatorship of the proletariat is a queer Latin word, in practice it is that same Soviet power which is transferring the state apparatus to the workers. Hence, it is the loyal friend and ally of the toilers and the merciless enemy of all forms of exploitation. That is why, in the long run, we shall defeat the imperialists. We possess profound sources of strength, a broad and deep reservoir of human material, such as is not possessed, and never will be possessed, by any bourgeois government. We have material upon which we can draw ever more deeply, by passing from the advanced workers, not only to the average workers, but even lower—to the toiling peasants, to the poor and poorest peasants. Comrades from Petrograd were recently saying that Petrograd has given all its political workers and cannot give more. But when the critical hour struck, Petrograd, as Comrade Zinoviev justly remarked, proved magnificent, it seemed to be a city which was giving birth to new forces. Workers who appeared to be below the average level, who had no state or political experience whatsoever, rose to their full height and provided numerous forces for propaganda, agitation and organisation, and performed miracle after miracle. Our source of miracles is still very great. All strata of workers and peasants not yet drawn into the work are our true friends and allies. We have now frequently to rely upon these thin strata in the administration of the state. We must appeal more and more to the non members of the Party, both in our Party work and in Soviet work, we must resort more and more boldly to the services of non Party workers and peasants, not with the purpose of immediately bringing them over to our side, of bringing them into our Party—that is not important—but with the purpose of arousing in them the consciousness that their help is needed for the salvation of the country. When, in those who were least of all permitted access by the landlords and capitalists to the administration of the state, we inspire the consciousness that we are calling on them to join with us in laying the solid foundation of the socialist republic, our cause will be absolutely unvincible.

That is why we are in a position to say with absolute certitude, on the basis of the experience of the last two years, that every new military success will considerably hasten the time—it is already close at hand—when we shall devote our forces entirely to peaceful constructive work. We are able to pledge ourselves, on the basis of the experience we have gained, that within the next few years we shall perform incomparably greater miracles in the work of peaceful construction than we performed in these two years of successful war against the all powerful Entente [*Applause*]

Comrades, permit me in conclusion to read the draft of a resolution which I submit for your approval

The Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic desires to live in peace with all nations and to devote all its energies to the work of internal construction in order to set going its production, transport and public administration on the basis of the Soviet system in which it hitherto has been prevented, firstly, by the oppression of German imperialism and then by the intervention of the Entente and by the hunger blockade

"The workers and peasants' government has frequently made proposals of peace to the Entente powers, to wit, the appeal of the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs to the American representative, Mr Poole, on August 5, 1918 to President Wilson on October 24 1918 to all the governments of the Entente, through representatives of neutral countries, on November 3, 1918, in the name of the Sixth All Russian Congress of Soviets on November 7, 1918 the note of Litvinov in Stockholm to representatives of the Entente on December 23, 1918 finally, the appeals of January 12 and January 17, the note to the governments of the Entente on February 4, 1919, the draft treaty drawn up together with Bullitt on March 12, 1919, and the declaration made through Nansen on May 7, 1919

Fully approving these repeated steps of the All Russian Central Executive Committee, the Council of People's Commissars and the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs, the Seventh Congress of Soviets once more reaffirms its unswerving desire for peace and once more proposes to all the powers of the Entente—Great Britain, France, the United States of America, Italy and Japan—jointly and severally, to undertake immediate negotiations for peace, and charges the All Russian Central Executive Committee, the Council of People's Commissars and the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs systematically to continue this peace policy and to adopt all measures necessary for its success'

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REPORT OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE AT THE NINTH
CONGRESS OF THE RUSSIAN COMMUNIST
PARTY (BOLSHEVIKS)

*March 29, 1920**

COMRADES, before commencing my report I must say that, like the report at the preceding congress, it is divided into two parts political and organisational. This division first of all leads us to inquire what shape the work of the Central Committee assumed in its external, its organisational aspect. Our Party has now been existing a whole year without J. M. Sverdlov, and his loss was bound to be reflected in the whole organisation of the Central Committee. No one so successfully united organisational and political work in one person as did Comrade Sverdlov, and we were obliged to attempt to make up for his work by the work of a committee.

During the year under review the current daily work of the Central Committee was conducted by the two bodies elected by the Plenum of the Central Committee: the Organisation Bureau of the Central Committee and the Political Bureau of the Central Committee. In order to achieve harmony and consistency in the decisions of these bodies the Secretary acted as a member of both. *The practice established was that the main function of the Organisation Bureau was to distribute the forces of the Party, while the function of the Political Bureau was to deal with political questions.* It goes without saying that this distinction is to a certain extent artificial: it is obvious that no policy is practicable that does not find expression in appointments and transferring people from one post to another. Consequently, every organisational question assumes a political significance, and the practice became established whereby the demand of a single member of the Central Committee was sufficient to have any question for any reason.

whatsoever examined as a political question To have attempted to divide the functions of the Central Committee in any other way would hardly have been expedient and would hardly have been justified in practice

This method of conducting business was productive of extremely favourable results no difficulties have arisen between the two bureaux on any occasion The work of these bodies on the whole proceeded harmoniously, and the practical execution of their decisions was facilitated by the presence of the Secretary Further more, the Secretary of the Party entirely and exclusively carried out the will of the Central Committee It must be emphasised from the very outset, so as to remove all misunderstanding, that only the corporate decisions of the Central Committee adopted in the Organisation Bureau or in the Political Bureau, or in the Plenum of the Central Committee—such matters exclusively were carried into effect by the Secretary of the Central Committee of the Party Were it otherwise, the Central Committee could not function properly

After these brief remarks on the distribution of work within the Central Committee, I shall proceed to my task, viz, the report of the Central Committee To present a report of the political work of the Central Committee is a difficult task if understood in the literal sense of the term A vast amount of the work of the Political Bureau during this year consisted in making current decisions on all questions bearing on policy or involving the operations of all the Soviet and Party organisations and of all organisations of the working class, or embracing and tending to direct the work of the whole Soviet Republic The Political Bureau decided all questions of foreign and domestic policy Naturally, to attempt to enumerate these questions, even approximately, would be impossible You will find material for a general summary in the printed matter prepared by the Central Committee for this congress To attempt to repeat this summary in my report would be beyond my powers and, it seems to me, would not be interesting to the delegates Every one of us who works in any Party or Soviet organisation follows the unusual succession of political questions, both foreign and domestic The way these questions were decided, as expressed in the decrees of the Soviet

government, in the activities of the Party organisations and at every turn of events, is in itself an estimate of the Central Committee of the Party. It must be said that the questions were so numerous that they frequently had to be decided under circumstances of extreme haste, and it was only because of the fact that the members of the committee knew each other so thoroughly, knew every shade of opinion, it was only because of the confidence they had in each other, that this work could be accomplished at all. Otherwise it would have been beyond the powers of a body even three times the size. It frequently happened in deciding complex questions that meetings had to be replaced by telephone conversations. This was done in the certainty that obviously complicated and disputed questions would not be overlooked. Now, when I am called upon to make a general report, instead of giving a chronological review and grouping of subjects, I will take the liberty of dwelling on the main and most essential points, such, moreover, as connect the experience of yesterday, or, more correctly, of the past year, with the tasks that now confront us.

The time is not yet ripe for a history of the Soviet power. And even if it were ripe, I must say for myself—and, it seems to me, for the Central Committee as well—that it is not our intention to be historians. What interests us is the present and the future. We take the year now under review as material, as a lesson, as a foothold, from which we must proceed further. Regarded from this point of view, the work of the Central Committee falls into two big categories: work connected with military problems and problems which determine the international situation of the republic, and work of a domestic nature, peaceful economic construction, which began to come to the fore probably only at the end of last year or the beginning of the present year, when it became absolutely obvious that a decisive victory had already been won on the decisive fronts of the civil war. Our military situation last spring was an extremely difficult one: as you remember, we were still to experience quite a number of defeats, to experience new, vast and hitherto unexpected attacks on the part of the representatives of counter-revolution and the

representatives of the Entente * It was therefore only natural that the greater part of this period was devoted to the solution of military problems, problems of the civil war, such as the faint hearts, not to speak of the Menshevik and Socialist Revolutionary Parties and other representatives of petty bourgeois democracy, the mass of intermediary elements, regarded as unsolvable, such as induced them to declare quite sincerely that this problem could not be solved, that Russia was backward and enfeebled and could not overcome the capitalist system of the whole world, seeing that the revolution in the West had been delayed And we were therefore called upon to maintain our position and to declare with absolute firmness and conviction that we would succeed We were obliged to issue the slogans "Everything for victory!" and "Everything for the war!" For the sake of these slogans it was necessary consciously and deliberately to forego the satisfaction of a number of essential demands, and very frequently to deny assistance to many, in the conviction that every effort must be concentrated on the war, on achieving victory in the war which the Entente had forced upon us And it was only because the Party was on the alert, it was only because the Party was strictly disciplined, because the authority of the Party was able to unite all departments and institutions, because the slogans issued by the Central Committee were taken up by tens, hundreds, thousands and finally by millions of people like one man, and because incredible sacrifices were made—it was only because of all this that the miracle which took place actually did take place It was only because of all this that we were victorious, in spite of the twofold, threefold and even fourfold attack of the imperialists of the Entente and the imperialists of the whole world And, of course, while emphasising this aspect of the matter, we must also bear in mind that it is a lesson which teaches that without discipline and without centralisation we would never have accomplished this task The incredible sacrifices we bore in order to save the country from counter revolution and in order that the Russian revolution might triumph over Denikin, Yudenich and Kolchak are a pledge of the world social revolution To achieve this, we had to have Party discipline, strict centralisation and the absolute

conviction that the untold sacrifice of tens and hundreds of thousands of people would help us to accomplish all these tasks, and that their accomplishment could be achieved and guaranteed. And for this purpose it was essential that our Party and the class which is carrying out the dictatorship, the working class, should serve as elements uniting millions upon millions of toilers in Russia and all over the world.

If we reflect what, after all, was the profound reason why this historical miracle took place, namely, the miracle that a weak, exhausted and backward country defeated the most powerful countries in the world, we shall find that the reason was centralisation, discipline and untold self sacrifice. And how was this achieved? Millions of toilers in a country that was the least educated of all countries could achieve organisation, discipline and centralisation only because workers who had passed through the school of capitalism were united by capitalism, because the proletariat in all the advanced countries became united, and the more advanced the country, the more it was united, and on the other hand, because property ownership, capitalist property ownership, petty property ownership under commodity production disunites the workers. Property ownership disunites, whereas we are uniting and shall continue to unite ever increasing numbers of toilers all over the world. Even those who are blind, even those who did not wish to see it, see it now. Our enemies grew more and more disunited. They were disunited by capitalist property ownership, by private ownership under commodity production, whether they were small businessmen profiteering from the sale of surplus grain and enriching themselves at the expense of the starving workers, or whether they were the capitalists of the various countries, even though they possessed military might and had created the "League of Nations," the great "united League" of all the advanced nations of the world. Unity of this kind is a sheer fiction, a sheer fraud, a sheer lie. And we have seen—and this is a great example—that this famous "League of Nations," which attempted to distribute the right to govern states, to divide up the world—this famous alliance proved to be a myth which collapsed immediately, because it was founded on capitalist prop-

erty ownership We have seen this on a great historical scale, and it confirms the fundamental truth, on the recognition of which we based our justification, our absolute certainty in the success of the October Revolution, our certainty that we were embarking on a cause to which, in spite of all difficulties and obstacles, millions and millions of toilers in all countries would adhere We knew that we had allies, that it was only necessary to display a spirit of self sacrifice in the one country on which history had laid an honourable and difficult task, and these incredible sacrifices would be repaid a hundredfold For every month we exist in our country is winning for us millions of allies in all countries of the world

If, after all, we reflect why it was we succeeded, why we were able to succeed, and why we were bound to succeed we shall find that the reason is that our enemies, despite the bonds which formally bound them to the most powerful governments and representatives of capital in the world—however united they may have been formally—proved to be disunited Their internal bond in fact disunited them, caused them to fight among themselves Capitalist property ownership disintegrated them, transformed them from allies into wild beasts, so that they failed to see that Soviet Russia was increasing the number of her followers among the British soldiers landed in Archangel, among the French sailors landed in Sevastopol, among the workers of all countries, where the social compromisers were obliged to take the part of capital in every advanced country without exception And in the long run, this fundamental cause, this profound cause, secured us a certain victory It continues to be the chief the insuperable and inexhaustible source of our strength, and it permits us to affirm that when we establish the dictatorship of the proletariat in our country in its full measure, and achieve the maximum unity of its forces within its vanguard and its leading Party, we may expect the world revolution And this in fact, is an expression of will, an expression of the proletarian determination to fight, it is an expression of the proletarian determination to achieve an alliance of millions and millions of workers in all countries The bourgeois and the pseudo Socialists of the Second International declared this

to be mere agitational phrases. But it is a historical reality, borne out by the bloody and painful experience of the civil war in Russia. For this civil war was a war against world capital, and in the conflict capital collapsed of itself, it devoured itself, whereas we emerged steeled and strengthened, although in our country the proletariat was perishing from hunger and typhus. Within the country we succeeded in winning the support of increasing numbers of toilers. What the compromisers formerly regarded as agitational phrases, what the bourgeoisie is accustomed to sneer at, has been transformed in these years of our revolution, and particularly in the year under review, into an absolute and indisputable historical fact, a fact which enables us to say with positive assurance that our having accomplished this confirms that we possess a world wide basis, immeasurably wider than was ever the case in any previous revolution. We have an international alliance. This alliance has nowhere been registered, has never been formulated, from the point of view of "public law" it means nothing, but actually it means everything in the disintegrating capitalist world. Every month that we were winning positions, or were merely maintaining ourselves against an incredibly powerful enemy, proved to the world that we were right, and brought us millions of new supporters.

This process was a difficult one, it was accompanied by tremendous defeats. In the year under review the monstrous White terror in Finland* was followed by the defeat of the Hungarian revolution, which was stifled by the representatives of the Entente,¹ who had a secret treaty with Rumania and had deceived their parliaments.

It was a vile piece of treachery, this conspiracy of the international Entente to crush the Hungarian revolution by means of a White terror, not to mention the fact that they consented to every possible agreement with the German compromisers in order to strangle the German revolution. These people, who had declared Liebknecht to be an honest German, flung themselves, together with the German imperialists, on this honest German like mad

¹ See note to p. 52 *—Ed

dogs They surpassed themselves But every act of suppression on their part only strengthened and consolidated us, while it undermined them

And it seems to me that we must draw the lesson from this fundamental experience particularly Here we must give especial thought to basing our agitation and propaganda on an analysis and explanation of why we were successful, why the sacrifices of the civil war repaid themselves a hundredfold, and how we are to use this experience in order to succeed in another war, a war on a bloodless front, a war which has only changed its form, but which is being waged by those same representatives, servitors and leaders of the old capitalist world, only much more vigorously, much more zealously and brutally Our revolution more than any other has borne out the maxim that the strength of revolution, the vigour of its assault, its energy, its determination and its triumph intensify the resistance of the bourgeoisie The more successful we are, the more the capitalist exploiters learn to unite and the more determined their assault For, as you all remember—it is not so long ago from the standpoint of time, but a long time ago from the standpoint of the march of events—you remember that at the beginning of the October Revolution Bolshevism was regarded as a freak. And while in Russia this view, which was a reflection of the feeble development and weakness of the proletarian revolution, was very soon abandoned, it has also been abandoned in Europe Bolshevism has become a world wide phenomenon the workers' revolution has raised its head The Soviet system, in creating which in November (October) we followed the testament of 1905, developing our own experience, has become a phenomenon of world history

Two camps are now quite consciously facing each other all over the world, without the slightest exaggeration It must be pointed out that it was only this year that they became locked in a decisive and final struggle And now, at the time of this very congress, we are perhaps passing through one of the greatest, severest and still incomplete periods of transition from war to peace You all know what happened to the leaders of the imperialist powers of the Entente, who had announced to the whole world

"We shall never stop the war against those usurpers, those bandits, those grabbers of power, those enemies of democracy, the Bolsheviks" You know that they first removed the blockade You know that their attempt to unite the small powers failed, because we were able to win over not only the workers of all countries, but also the bourgeoisie of the small countries, and were able to do so because the imperialists are oppressors not only of the workers of their own countries but also of the bourgeoisie of the small states You know that we won over the vacillating bourgeoisie in the advanced countries And now the moment has come when the Entente is breaking its former promises and assurances and is violating the treaties which it concluded in large numbers with the various Russian White Guards And now with these treaties it is left empty handed, because it has flung away hundreds and millions of money but has failed to complete the business Now it has removed the blockade and has virtually begun negotiations for peace with the Soviet Republic But these negotiations are not being completed, and therefore the small powers have lost faith in it and in its might So we see that the position of the Entente its external position, is absolutely beyond definition from the standpoint of customary conceptions of jurisprudence The states of the Entente are neither at peace with the Bolsheviks nor at war with them, they have recognised us and they have not recognised us And this complete disintegration of our opponents, who were convinced that they were something, proved that they are nothing but a herd of capitalist beasts, who have quarrelled among themselves and are absolutely incapable of injuring us

The position now is that proposals for peace have been officially made to us by Latvia * Finland has sent a telegram which officially speaks of a demarcation line,¹ but which is in fact a swing over to a policy of peace Finally, Poland, the Poland whose representatives so vigorously brandished and still brandish their weapons, Poland, which received more train loads of artillery and promises of help than any other country, on the sole condition that she continue the war against Russia—even Poland, the

¹ I e., the line dividing the dispositions of the hostile armies.—Ed

unstable position of whose government compels her to consent to any military adventure, has invited us to begin negotiations for peace * We must be extremely cautious Our policy demands the most careful attention Here it is most difficult to find the correct line to follow, for nobody knows on what track the train is standing The enemy himself does not know what he will do next The gentlemen who represent French policy and who are most zealous in inciting Poland, and the leaders of landlord and bourgeois Poland do not know what will happen next, they do not know what they want Today they say "Gentlemen, a few more train loads of guns and a few hundred millions and we are prepared to fight the Bolsheviks" They are hushing up the news of the strikes which are spreading in Poland, they are intensifying the censorship in order to conceal the truth But the revolutionary movement in Poland is growing The growth of revolution in Germany, in its new phase, in its new stage, now that after the German Kornilov attempt,** the workers are creating a Red Army, plainly shows (as the recent telegrams from Germany confirm) that the workers are becoming more and more aroused The representatives of bourgeois and landlord Poland are beginning to think "Is it not too late? Will there not be a Soviet republic in Poland sooner than a government act is drawn up for war or peace?" They do not know what to do They do not know what the morrow will bring We know that our forces are growing vastly stronger every month, and will grow still stronger in future As a result, our international position is much more stable than it ever was before But we must follow the international crisis with extreme caution and be prepared for any eventuality We have received a formal peace proposal from Poland These gentlemen are in a desperate case, the more desperate that their friends the German monarchists, people with more training and political experience and knowledge, have embarked on a venture, a Kornilov revolt The Polish bourgeoisie are throwing out proposals of peace because they know that the venture may end in a Kornilov revolt in Poland Knowing that our enemy is in desperate straits, that our enemy does not know what he wants and what he will do tomorrow, we must realise quite clearly that in spite of the fact that proposals of

peace have been made, war is possible. It is impossible to foresee what their future conduct will be. We have seen these people, we know these Kerenskys, these Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries. During the past two years we have seen how one day they were driven towards Kolchak, the next day almost came over to the Bolsheviks, and then went over to Denikin, and how all this was camouflaged by talk about freedom and democracy. We know these gentlemen, and therefore we grasp at the proposal of peace with both hands, are prepared to make the maximum amount of concessions, in the assurance that the conclusion of peace with the small states will advance our cause infinitely more rapidly than war. For the imperialists deceive the toiling masses by means of war, and under its cover conceal the truth about Soviet Russia. Any peace will therefore open a hundred times wider channels for our influence. Our influence has already become considerable during these years. The Third, Communist International has gained enormous success. But at the same time we know that war may be forced on us any day. Our enemies themselves do not realise what they are capable of in this respect. There cannot be the slightest doubt that military preparations are under way. Many of Russia's neighbours, and perhaps many states that are not her neighbours, are engaged in arming themselves. That is why we must manoeuvre in our international policy, that is why we must firmly adhere to the course we have taken, and must be prepared for anything. We have waged the war for peace with extreme vigour. This war is producing excellent results. We have made a very good showing in this sphere of the struggle, at any rate not worse than in the sphere of the operations of the Red Army, on the bloody front. But even if the small states desired peace, the conclusion of peace does not depend on them. They are up to their ears in debt to the countries of the Entente, and the latter are desperately bickering and competing among themselves. And therefore we must remember that from the point of view of the world situation, the historical situation created by the civil war and by the war against the Entente, peace is, of course, possible. But the measures we take for peace must be accompanied by an intensification of our military preparedness, and in

no case must our army be disarmed Our army offers a real guarantee that not the slightest attempt will be made on us by the imperialist powers, for although they may count on certain ephemeral successes at first, not one of them will escape defeat at the hands of Soviet Russia That we must realise, that must be made the basis of our agitation and propaganda, that is what we must prepare for And we must solve the problem which, in view of our growing exhaustion, compels us to combine the one with the other

I now pass to those important and fundamental considerations which induced us to direct the toiling masses with such determination to use the army for the solution of certain basic and urgent problems The old source of discipline, capital, has been enfeebled, the old source of unity has disappeared We must create a different kind of discipline, a different source of discipline and unity Compulsion provokes the indignation, howls and outcries of the bourgeois democrats, who make great play of the words freedom and equality but do not understand that freedom for capital is a crime against the toilers In our fight against falsehood we introduced labour service and proceeded to unite the toilers, without fearing compulsion For nowhere has a revolution ever been effected without compulsion, and the proletariat has the right to resort to compulsion in order to maintain itself at all costs When these gentlemen, the bourgeois, these gentlemen, the compromisers, these gentlemen, the German Independents, the Austrian Independents and the French Longuetists, argued about the historical factor, they always forgot a factor like the revolutionary determination, steadfastness and inflexibility of the proletariat At a moment when the capitalist countries and the capitalist class are disintegrating at a moment of crisis and despair, this political factor is the only decisive factor Talk about minority and majority, about democracy and freedom, decides nothing, whatever the heroes of a past historical period may say It is the class consciousness and firmness of the working class that count here If the working class is prepared to make sacrifices, if it has shown that it is able to strain every nerve, the problem will be solved Every thing must be directed to the solution of this problem The reso

luteness of the working class, its inflexible adherence to the watch word "Death rather than surrender"—that is not only a historical factor, it is also a factor that will determine victory. We are now proceeding from this victory and from this certainty to the problems of peaceful economic construction, the solution of which is the chief function of our congress. In this respect we cannot in my opinion, speak of the report of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee, or rather of the political report of the Central Committee. We must say frankly and openly that this, comrades, is a question which you must decide, which you must weigh with all your authority as the supreme Party body. We have laid the question before you clearly. We have taken up a definite stand. It is your duty finally to confirm, correct or amend our decision. But in its report the Central Committee must say that on this fundamental and urgent question it has taken up an absolutely definite stand. The task now is to apply to the peaceful tasks of economic construction, the restoration of our disrupted industry, everything that can fuse the proletariat into an absolute unity. Here we need the iron discipline, the iron system, without which we could not have held on for two months, let alone for over two years. We must utilise our success. On the other hand, it must be realised that this transition will demand many sacrifices, although the country has already borne so many.

The principles involved were clear to the Central Committee. Our activities were entirely subordinated to this policy and were conducted in this spirit. Take, for instance, such a question, one which may appear to be a partial question, which in itself, if torn from its context, cannot of course claim to be a question of fundamental principle, *viz*, the question of corporate or individual management. This question, which you will have to settle, must be regarded from the point of view of the knowledge, the experience, the revolutionary practice we have gained*. For instance, we are told that "the corporate principle is one of the forms in which the masses participate in the work of government." But we in the Central Committee discussed this question, took a decision and must report to you. Comrades, such theoretical confusion cannot be tolerated. Had we permitted a tenth part of this

theoretical confusion in the fundamental question of our military activities and the civil war, we would have been beaten, and would have deserved to be beaten. Permit me, comrades, in connection with the report of the Central Committee, and in connection with this question of whether the new class should participate in the work of government on a corporate or an individual basis to introduce a little bit of theory, to point out how a class governs and in what the rule of a class consists. We are not novices in this matter, and what distinguishes our revolution from former revolutions is that there is no utopianism in our revolution. The new class, having replaced the old class, can maintain itself only by a desperate struggle against other classes, and will finally triumph only if it can bring about the abolition of classes in general. That is what the vast and complex process of the class struggle demands, otherwise, you will sink into a morass of confusion. In what does the domination of a class consist? In what did the domination of the bourgeoisie over the feudal lords consist? The constitution spoke of freedom and equality. That was a lie. As long as there are toilers, property owners are capable of profiteering, and indeed as property owners they are compelled to profiteer. We declare that there is no equality, that the well fed man is not the equal of the hungry man, that the profiteer is not the equal of the toiler.

In what does the domination of a class consist now? The domination of the proletariat consists in the fact that the ownership of property by landlords and capitalists has been abolished. The spirit and foundation of all former constitutions, even the most republican and democratic, lay in property. Our constitution has the right, has won itself the right, to a place in history because the abolition of property is not confined to paper. The triumphant proletariat has abolished property and completely destroyed it—and therein lies its domination as a class. The prime thing is the question of property. When the question of property was solved practically, the domination of the class was assured. When after that the constitution inscribed on paper what had actually been effected, namely, the abolition of capitalist and landlord property, and added that the working class, according

to the constitution, enjoys more rights than the peasantry, and the exploiters have no rights whatsoever—that was a record of the fact that the domination of our class had been established and that we had bound to ourselves all strata and all small groups of toilers. The petty bourgeois property owners are disunited, those among them who have more property are the enemies of those who have less property, while the proletarians, by abolishing property, have declared open war on them. There are still many unenlightened and ignorant people who are in favour of any kind of freedom of trade, but who, when they see the discipline and self-sacrifice displayed in securing a victory over the exploiters, cannot fight, they are not for us, but they are unable to oppose us. It is only the domination of a class that determines the relationships of property and which class is to be on top. Those who, as we frequently observe, associate the question of what determines the domination of a class with the question of “democratic centralism” are only causing confusion that makes it impossible to carry on any work successfully. In propaganda and agitation clarity is essential. When our enemies confess that we have performed miracles in the development of agitation and propaganda, this must not be understood superficially, as meaning that we had large numbers of agitators and used up large quantities of paper, but in the intrinsic sense that the truth contained in that agitation penetrated to people’s minds. It is impossible to avoid that truth.

Whenever classes replaced other classes, they changed property relationships. Property relationships were altered when the bourgeoisie replaced feudalism. The constitution of the bourgeoisie says that the owner of property is not the equal of the beggar. This was the freedom of the bourgeoisie. This equality ensured the capitalist class a dominating position in the state. But do you think that when the bourgeoisie replaced feudalism it confused the state with administration? No, they were not such fools. They said that in order to govern they required men who know how to govern and that they would take feudal lords for that purpose and remould them. That is what they did. Was that a mistake? No, comrades, the art of government does not descend from heaven, it is not inspired by the Holy Ghost. And the fact

that a given class is the advanced class does not make it immediately capable of governing. We have an example of this when the bourgeoisie triumphed it took for the work of government members of another class, the feudal class there was nowhere else to turn. We must look facts soberly in the face. The bourgeoisie had recourse to members of the former class. Similarly, the task that now faces us is to take its knowledge and training and to use and subordinate all this to the success of our class. We therefore say that the victorious class must be mature and maturity is attested not by a document or a certificate, but by experience and practice. The bourgeoisie triumphed but did not know how to govern, and it made sure of its victory by proclaiming a new constitution and by recruiting administrators from among its own class and setting about training them, making use for this purpose of the administrators of the former class. It trained its new administrators with the help of the whole machinery of state, it sequestered the feudal institutions and admitted only the wealthy to the schools, and thus, in the course of years and decades, it trained administrators from among its own class. Today, in a state which is constructed according to the pattern and model of the dominant class, we must act as every state acted. If we do not want to be guilty of sheer utopianism and meaningless phrasemongering, we must learn from the experience of the past. We must safeguard the constitution won by the revolution, but for purposes of administration and the organisation of the state we need people who are acquainted with the art of government, and who have state and business experience. And we can obtain such people only from among the members of the former class.

Opinions on corporate management are all too frequently marked by a spirit of ignorance, an anti expert spirit. We shall never succeed with such a spirit. In order to succeed we must make a profound study of the history of the old bourgeois world. In order to build communism we must take technology and science and make them available to wider circles, and we can acquire technology and science only from the bourgeoisie. Prominence must be given to this fundamental question, it must be treated as one of the basic problems of economic construction.

We have to govern with the help of people who belong to the class we have overthrown, they are imbued with the prejudices of their class and we must reeducate them. At the same time we must recruit our own administrators from our own class. We must use the whole machinery of the state in order to ensure that the educational institutions, extra school training and practical schooling shall be placed at the disposal of the proletarians, the workers and the toiling peasants, under the guidance of the Communists.

This is the only way to regard the matter. After the two years' experience we have had we cannot argue as though we were only just setting about the work of socialist construction. We committed enough follies in and around the Smolny period. There is nothing to be ashamed of in that. How were we to know, seeing that we were setting about an entirely new task? We tried first one way, then another. We swam with the current, because it was impossible to distinguish what was right from what was wrong, which is something that requires time. All that is now a matter of the recent past. We have got beyond that. That past in which chaos and enthusiasm prevailed is now over. The Peace of Brest Litovsk is a document of that past. It is a historical document—nay more, a historical period. The Peace of Brest Litovsk was forced upon us because we were helpless in every respect. What sort of period was it? It was a period of helplessness from which we emerged victorious. It was a period in which corporate management was universal. You cannot escape that historical fact by declaring that corporate management is a school of government. You cannot stay forever in the preparatory class of a school. That will not do. We are now grown up, and we shall be beaten and beaten again in every field if we behave like school children. We must push forward. We must rise higher, displaying energy and unanimity of will. Tremendous difficulties face the trade unions. We must see to it that they approach this task in a spirit of hostility to the survivals of this famous democracy. All these outcries against appointments, all this old and dangerous rubbish which finds its way into resolutions and conversations must be swept aside. Otherwise we cannot succeed. If in these two years we have failed

to learn this lesson, we are lagging, and those who lag get beaten

The task is an extremely difficult one. Our trade unions have given tremendous assistance in building the proletarian state. They were the link which connected the Party with the unenlightened millions. Do not let us fool ourselves, the trade unions bore the whole brunt of the fight when the state needed help on food work. Was this not a tremendous task? The *Bulletin of the Central Statistical Board* has recently been published. Its summaries are by statisticians who cannot be suspected of Bolshevism. Two interesting figures are given: in 1918 and 1919 the workers in the consuming gubernias received seven poods, while the peasants in the producing gubernias consumed seventeen poods a year. Before the war they used to consume sixteen poods a year. These two figures illustrate the relation of classes in the struggle for food. The proletariat continued to make sacrifices. People are crying out against force! But the proletariat justified and legitimatised force and justified that force by making the greatest sacrifices. The majority of the population, the peasants of the producing gubernias of starving and impoverished Russia, have for the first time in their lives been eating more than they ever ate during the centuries of tsarist and capitalist Russia. And we declare that the masses will starve until the Red Army triumphs. It was necessary that the vanguard of the working class should make this sacrifice. This struggle is a school, but when we leave this school we must go forward. The step must be taken at all costs. Like all trade unions, the old trade unions have their history and their past. In the past they were organs of resistance to those who oppressed labour, to capitalism. But when the class became the governing class, and when it is now being called upon to make great sacrifices, to starve and to perish, the situation has changed.

Not everybody understands this change, not everybody grasps its significance. And in this the responsibility partly lies with certain of the Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries who are demanding that individual management shall be replaced by corporate management*. No, comrades, that will not work. We have got beyond that. We are now faced with a very difficult task hav-

ing succeeded on the bloody front, we must now succeed on a bloodless front. That war is a much more difficult one. That front is a most arduous one. We declare this openly to all class-conscious workers. The war which we won on the military front must be followed by a bloodless war. The situation is that the more we were victorious, the more there proved to be such regions as Siberia, the Ukraine and the Kuban. In those regions the peasants are rich, and there are no proletarians, and if there is a proletariat, it is corrupted by petty bourgeois habits. We know that every body with a piece of land in those regions says "A fig for the government, I shall take all I want from the starving. What do I care about the government?" The peasant profiteer who, when left to the tender mercies of Denikin, swung over to our side, will now be aided by the Entente. The war has changed its front and its form. It is now being waged by trade, by bag trading, it has made the latter international. In Comrade Kamenev's theses published in the *Izvestiya of the Central Committee* the principles on which this is based are fully expressed*. They want to make bag trading international. They want to transform peaceful economic construction into the peaceful disintegration of the Soviet power. I beg your pardon, Messieurs the imperialists, we are on our guard. We say. We have fought, and we shall therefore regard as our basic slogan the one which helped us to victory, we shall retain that slogan in its entirety and apply it to the field of labour. That slogan is the firmness and unanimity of the proletariat. We must discard the old prejudices and the old habits.

I should like, in conclusion, to dwell on the pamphlet by Comrade Gussev,** which in my opinion deserves attention in two respects: it is a good pamphlet not only from the formal aspect, because of the fact that it was written for our congress. Hitherto it has for some reason been our custom to write resolutions. They say that all forms of literature are good except tedious literature. It seems to me that resolutions must be regarded as a tedious form of literature. It would be better if we followed Comrade Gussev's example and wrote fewer resolutions and more pamphlets even though they contained as many errors as his pamphlet contains. But the pamphlet is a good one in spite of these errors, because

it concentrates attention on a fundamental economic plan for the restoration of the industry and production of the whole country, and subordinates everything to this fundamental economic plan. In its theses distributed today, the Central Committee has introduced a whole paragraph which is taken entirely from Comrade Gussev's theses. This fundamental economic plan can be worked out in greater detail with the help of experts. We must remember that the plan is calculated for a period of several years. We do not promise to save the country from starvation immediately. We say that the struggle will be much more difficult than the struggle on the military front. But it is a struggle that interests us more. It brings us nearer to our real and main tasks. It demands a maximum exertion of effort and the unanimity of will which we displayed formerly and must now display again. If we accomplish this, we shall gain no less a victory on the bloodless front than on the front of the civil war.

SPEECH DELIVERED AT A JOINT MEETING OF THE ALL-
RUSSIAN CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, THE
MOSCOW SOVIET OF WORKERS', PEASANTS' AND RED
ARMY DEPUTIES THE TRADE UNIONS AND THE FAC-
TORY COMMITTEES *

May 5, 1920

COMRADES, I should like to draw your attention to one aspect of the present war which, from the international point of view, or rather from the point of view of the international situation of Russia, distinguishes it from previous wars. Of course, none of you doubt, or can doubt, that this war is one of the links in the long chain of events which mark the savage resistance of the international bourgeoisie to the victorious proletariat, the savage attempt of the international bourgeoisie to stifle Soviet Russia and overthrow the first Soviet government at all costs and by any means. Of course there cannot be the slightest doubt that a connection between these phenomena, between the former attempts of the international bourgeoisie and the present war, does exist. But at the same time we see a tremendous difference between this war and the former war from the standpoint of our international situation, we see what a powerful jolt our struggle has given to the international working class movement, we see how the world proletariat regards the victories of Soviet Russia and how the world proletarian struggle is developing and growing stronger, and we also see what an enormous work has been done in the period of a little over two years that the Soviet Republic is in existence.

You will recall that not very long ago some of the most responsible and powerful ministers of some of the most powerful capitalist powers, who are unrivalled anywhere in the world, declared that they had formed an alliance of fourteen powers against Russia.¹

¹ See note to p. 56 *—Ed

You know that under the pressure of the all powerful capitalists of France and England, this alliance supported Yudenich, Kolchak and Denikin, and that it created what from the military point of view was a vast and comprehensive plan. And if we smashed that plan, it was because the unity of the imperialists was only an apparent unity, and because the power of the international bourgeoisie will not stand a single test if it comes to real self sacrifice. It became apparent that after four years of imperialist slaughter the toiling masses refuse to recognise the justice of a war against us, and that in these masses we have a great ally. The plan of the Entente was indeed a destructive one, but it collapsed. It collapsed because, in spite of their powerful alliance, the capitalist powers were unable to accomplish that plan—they were powerless to put it into effect. Not a single one of the powers, each of which might have gained the upper hand over us, was able to display unity because it was not supported by the organised proletariat. Not a single army—the French nor the British—proved equal to the task of rendering its soldiers capable of fighting the Soviet Republic on Russian soil.

If we recall to mind the desperate position our republic was in when it actually faced the whole world, when it faced powers infinitely stronger than we were, and if we recall how victoriously we emerged from these severe trials, we shall have a clear idea of what is facing us now. The plan we have before us now is not a new one, but at the same time it does not resemble that truly comprehensive and unified plan with which we were confronted six months ago. It is but the remnants of the old plan. And this, from the point of view of the international relation of forces, is the best guarantee of the comparative hopelessness of the present attempt. The old plan was an attempt on the part of all the imperialist powers in alliance with the small border states of the old Russian Empire—which were formerly shamefully and monstrously oppressed by the tsarist and capitalist government of Great Russia—to stifle the workers' and peasants' republic. But now certain powers, in alliance with one of the border states, are attempting to do what all the imperialist powers, in alliance with all the border states, failed to do, and what they undertook a year or half a year

ago in alliance with Kolchak, Denikin and others. We are now confronted by the remnants of the imperialist plan. The bourgeoisie display their tenacity particularly in these imperialist plans, that is what distinguishes these plans. They know that they are fighting for power at home, and that here it is not the Russian question nor the Polish question that is being decided, but the question of their own existence. We must therefore expect that they will at tempt to re create from any remnant the old plan that failed.

The contradiction of interests of the imperialist states is obvious to us all. Despite the declarations of their ministers that disputed questions are being regulated in a peaceful way, the fact is that the imperialist powers cannot take any serious step in any political question without falling out among themselves. The French need a powerful Poland and a powerful Russia of the tsarist type and are prepared to make any sacrifices to achieve this aim. But Great Britain, because of her geographical position, is striving for some thing else—to dismember Russia and to enfeeble Poland, so as to establish an equilibrium between France and Germany, which would assure the victorious imperialists the administration of the colonies they have secured by plundering Germany in the World War. The conflict of interests here is a crying one, and however much the representatives of the imperialist powers at San Remo assure us that complete unanimity prevails among the Allies, we know that there is no concord among them.

We know that the Polish offensive is a remnant of the old plan that once united the whole international bourgeoisie. And if that vast plan, which from the purely military standpoint was sure of success, nevertheless failed, the present plan is hopeless even from that standpoint. We also know that the imperialist powers which concluded an alliance with the Polish bourgeoisie and the Polish government got themselves entangled as never before. In recent months, weeks and days, the Polish bourgeoisie has been exposing itself to its own toiling masses at every stage of its policy, it is falling out with its own allies and cannot take a single consistent step in its policy. At one time declaring their irreconcilable attitude towards Soviet Russia and the impossibility of entering into any negotiations with the latter, at another removing the blockade

and solemnly announcing that fact in the name of an alleged alliance, an alleged League of Nations, and at another time again resorting to a policy of vacillation—the imperialists gave us, and are giving us, the opportunity of demonstrating the placcableness of our policy, of proving that our foreign policy has nothing in common with the tsarist policy or with the policy of the Russian capitalists and the Russian bourgeoisie, even the democratic bourgeoisie. We have proved to the world that our foreign policy has no resemblance to the policy ascribed to us by the bourgeois papers. Hence, there is not a single piece of deception in the policy of Poland which they have not themselves exposed. We know from the experience of three Russian revolutions how each of these revolutions matured, and how domestic and foreign policy developed on the basis of each of them. This experience has shown that our most faithful coadjutors in the preparation of revolution are those ruling classes which, while claiming all kinds of coalitions, Constituent Assemblies, etc., while claiming to express the will of the people, reveal in their own policy, in fact, reveal at every serious, difficult and responsible period in the life of the nation, the greed of the bourgeois groups, which are quarrelling among themselves and unable to come to terms, the greed of the competing capitalist groups, which expose themselves a hundred times more effectively than they are exposed by Communist propaganda. There is not a single state in which the working class, even the most revolutionary, could have been revolutionised by propaganda and agitation, if that agitation had not been corroborated by the practical conduct of the ruling classes of their country.

What is now taking place in all the capitalist countries, particularly in Poland, gives us the assurance that while we emerged victorious from an undoubtedly far more difficult war, and while we correctly judged the disunity of the various bourgeois groups and parties and their inability to come to agreement among themselves at a time when such agreement was particularly necessary for them—the improvement in our international situation is now tremendous. This gives us assurance not only from the standpoint of the internal relation of forces, but also from the international standpoint. If we take the whole system of modern im-

perialist states and their strivings—and we know that their striving to take advantage of every opportunity to attack Russia is incorrigible—and examine them absolutely objectively, from the standpoint of the irrefutable facts of the history of the last few years, and particularly of the last half year, we shall find that our international enemy is growing feebler, that the attempts of the imperialists to achieve unity are becoming more and more hopeless, and that from this point of view our victory is certain

But, comrades, if, occupied as we are with economic tasks and engrossed in the work of peaceful economic construction, we are menaced by a new war, it becomes essential that we should rapidly reform our ranks. Our army, which has recently become an army of labour,* must now turn its attention in another direction. We must abandon our other affairs and concentrate on this new war. We fully realise that after all we have already gone through the enemy that now confronts us is not terrible. But he may demand new and severe sacrifices from the workers and peasants, he may enormously complicate our work of economic construction, he may bring about the impoverishment and ruin of hundreds and thousands of peasant households, and his temporary successes may revive the extinguished hopes of the imperialists we have beaten, who, of course, will not fail to join forces with the enemy. We must therefore declare that the rule which we observed in all previous wars must be unconditionally applied now. If, despite our most pacific intentions, despite the fact that we have made tremendous concessions and have abandoned all national pretensions, the Polish landlords and the Polish bourgeoisie have forced a war on us, if we are convinced—as we should be—that the bourgeoisie of all countries, even those who are not helping the Poles now, will assist them when the war breaks out, because it is not the Russian question or the Polish question that is being decided, but the question of the existence of the whole bourgeoisie—if that is so, we must recall, and unconditionally and fully observe, the rule which we have always followed in our policy and which has always ensured us success. That rule is that if matters have reached the stage of war, everything must be subordinated to the interests of war, the whole internal life of the country must be

subordinated to the prosecution of war. Not the slightest hesitation in this respect can be tolerated. Difficult though it may be for the vast majority of our comrades to tear themselves from work which has only recently been placed on new lines, on lines more beneficial and essential from the point of view of the tasks of peaceful construction—we must remember that the least neglect, the least lack of attention may frequently involve the unnecessary death of tens of thousands of our best comrades, of the members of the younger generation of workers and peasants, of our Communists, who, as always, are to be found in the front ranks of the combatants. And so, once more—everything for the war! Not a single meeting, not a single conference must be held in which the foremost place in the discussion is not given to the question: “Have we done everything to help the war, have we sufficiently concentrated our forces, have we sent sufficient aid to the front?” Only those must remain here who are incapable of helping at the front. All our sacrifices, all our aid must be given to the front. All hesitation must be abandoned. And if we concentrate all our forces and make every necessary sacrifice there is no doubt that we shall be victorious on this occasion too.

PART II

THE POLICY OF THE PARTY TOWARDS THE PEASANTS IN THE PERIOD OF WAR COMMUNISM

ON COMBATING THE FAMINE

Report to a Joint Session of the All Russian Central Executive Committee, the Moscow Soviet of Workers', Peasants', and Red Army Deputies and the Trade Unions

*June 4, 1918 **

COMRADES, the subject I am about to speak of today is the great crisis which has overtaken all modern countries and which is perhaps pressing most severely on Russia, or, at any rate, is being felt by her far more severely than by other countries. And I must speak of this crisis, the famine which has afflicted us, in accordance with the problems that confront us as a result of the general situation. And when we speak of the general situation, we cannot of course confine ourselves to Russia, all the more that all countries of modern capitalist civilisation are now bound together more painfully and more distressingly than ever before.

Everywhere, both in the belligerent countries and in the neutral countries, the war, the imperialist war between two groups of gigantic plunderers, has resulted in an utter exhaustion of productive forces. Ruin and impoverishment have reached such a pitch that the most advanced, civilised and cultured countries, which for decades, nay for centuries, have not known what famine means, have been brought by the war to the point of famine in the genuine and literal sense of the term. It is true that in the advanced countries, especially in those in which large scale capitalism has long ago trained the population to the maximum level of economic organisation possible under that system, they have succeeded in properly distributing the famine, in keeping it longer at bay and in rendering it less acute. But Germany and Austria, for example, not to speak of the countries that have been defeated and enslaved, have for a long time been suffering from genuine starvation. We

can now open hardly a single issue of a newspaper without coming across numerous reports from the advanced and cultured countries—not only belligerent, but also neutral countries—such as Switzerland and certain of the Scandinavian countries—regarding the famine and the frightful hardships that have overtaken humanity as a result of the war

Comrades, those who have been following the development of European society have long ceased to doubt that capitalism cannot end peacefully and that it will lead either to a direct revolt of the broad masses against the yoke of capital or to the same result by the more painful and bloody way of war

For many years prior to the war the Socialists of all countries pointed out, and solemnly declared at their congresses,* that not only would a war between advanced countries be an enormous crime, but that such a war, a war for the partition of the colonies and the division of the spoils of the capitalists, would involve a complete rupture with the latest achievements of civilisation and culture, and that it might, and inevitably would, undermine the very foundations of human society. Because it is for the first time in history that the most powerful achievements of technology are being applied on such a scale, so destructively and with such energy for the extirpation of millions of human lives. When all productive forces are being thus devoted to the service of war, we see that the most gloomy prophecies are being fulfilled and that more and more countries are falling a prey to retrogression, starvation and a complete decline of productive forces

I am therefore led to recall how justified Engels, one of the great founders of scientific socialism, was when in 1887 he wrote that a European war would not only result, as he expressed it, in crowns falling from crowned heads by the dozen without anybody to pick them up, but that the war would also lead to brutalisation, degradation and retrogression of the whole of Europe, and that, on the other hand, the war would result either in the domination of the working class or in the creation of the conditions which would render its domination indispensable ** On this occasion the co-founder of Marxism expressed himself with extreme caution, for he clearly saw that if history took this course, the result would

be the collapse of capitalism and the extension of socialism, and that a more painful and severe transition period, greater want and a severer crisis, disruptive of all productive forces one could not imagine.

And we now clearly see the significance of the results of the imperialist slaughter of the peoples which has been dragging on for four years, when even the most advanced countries feel that the war has reached an impasse, that there is no escape from war under capitalism, and that it will lead to painful ruin. And if we, comrades, if the Russian revolution—which is not due to any particular merit of the Russian proletariat but to the general course of historical events, that by the will of history temporarily placed that proletariat in a foremost position and made it for the time being the vanguard of the world revolution—if it has befallen us to suffer with particular severity and acuteness the torments of famine, which is afflicting us with growing severity, we must clearly realise that these misfortunes are primarily and chiefly a result of the accursed imperialist war. This war has brought incredible misfortunes on all countries, but these misfortunes are being concealed, with only temporary success, from the masses and from the knowledge of the vast majority of the peoples.

As long as the yoke of war continues, as long as the war goes on, as long as, on the one hand, it is accompanied by hopes of victory and a belief that it is possible to emerge from this crisis as the result of the victory of one of the imperialist groups, and, on the other hand, an unbridled military censorship prevails and the people are intoxicated by the spirit of militarism, the mass of the population of the majority of the countries are held in ignorance of the abyss on the verge of which they are standing and into which they are already falling. And we are feeling this with particular acuteness now, because nowhere is there such a crying contradiction as in Russia to the vastness of the tasks set itself by the insurrectionary proletariat, which has understood that it is impossible to end the war, the war between the most powerful imperialist giants of the world, that this war cannot be ended without a proletarian revolution also embracing the whole world.

And since the march of events has led us to occupy one of the

most prominent places in this revolution and to remain for a long time, at least since November (October) 1917, an isolated detachment, not allowed by events to come to the aid of other detachments of international socialism with sufficient rapidity, the position we find ourselves in is now ten times more severe. After we have done all that can be done by the directly insurgent proletariat and the poor peasantry supporting it to overthrow their chief enemy and to protect the socialist revolution, we find that at the same time the oppression of the imperialist predatory powers surrounding Russia and the heritage of the war are weighing on us more and more heavily. These consequences of the war have not yet made themselves fully felt. We are now, in the summer of 1918, facing what is perhaps one of the most difficult, one of the most severe and critical transitional stages of our revolution. And its difficulty is not confined to the international arena, where our policy is inevitably bound to be one of retreat as long as our true and only ally, the international proletariat, is preparing, is only maturing, for revolt, but is not yet in a position to come out openly and solidly, although the whole course of events in Western Europe, the furious savagery of the recent battles on the Western front, the crisis which is growing increasingly acute in the belligerent countries, all go to show that the revolt of the European workers is not far off, and that although it may be delayed it will come inevitably.

It is precisely in such a situation that we are called upon to experience the great difficulties within the country, the consequences of which tend most to provoke considerable vacillations, the painful food shortage, the most painful famine that has overtaken us and that compels us to face a task which demands the maximum concentration of forces and the greatest organisation, and which at the same time does not permit a solution by the old methods. We shall undertake the solution of this problem together with the class that was at one with us in opposing the imperialist war, the class together with which we overthrew the imperialist monarchy and the imperialist republican bourgeoisie of Russia, the class that must forge its weapons, develop its forces and create its organisation in the midst of increasing difficulties, increasing problems and the increasing sweep of the revolution.

We are now facing the most elementary task of human society—to vanquish famine, or at least to mitigate at once the direct famine, the painful famine which has afflicted both capitals and numerous districts of agricultural Russia. And we have to solve this problem in the midst of a civil war and the furious and desperate resistance of the exploiters of all ranks and colours and of all orientations. Naturally, in such a situation the elements of political parties which cannot break with the old and cannot believe in the new are in a state of war which has only one aim—to restore the exploiters.

The news we are receiving from every corner of Russia demands that we shall face this question, the connection between the famine and the fight against the exploiters and the counter revolution which is raising its head. The task confronting us is to vanquish the famine, or at least to mitigate its severities until the new harvest, to defend the grain monopoly and the law of the Soviet state, the law of the proletarian state. All surpluses of grain must be collected, we must see to it that all stocks are brought to the places where they are needed and that they are properly distributed. This fundamental task means the preservation of human society, at the same time it involves incredible effort, which can be performed only in one way—by general and increased intensification of labour.

In the countries where this problem is being solved by means of war, it is being solved by military servitude, by instituting military servitude for the workers and peasants, it is being solved by granting new and greater advantages to the exploiters. In Germany, for instance, where public opinion is suppressed, where every attempt to protest against the war is stifled, but where nevertheless socialist hostility to the war persists, you will not find a more common method of saving the situation than by the rapid increase in the number of millionaires who have grown rich on the war. These new millionaires have grown desperately and furiously rich.

In all the imperialist countries the starvation of the masses offers a field for the most furious profiteering, incredible fortunes are being amassed on poverty and starvation.

This is encouraged by the imperialist countries, *e g.*, Germany, where starvation is organised best of all. And not without reason is it said that Germany is a centre of organised starvation, where rations and crusts are distributed among the population better than anywhere else. We there see that new millionaires are a common phenomenon of the imperialist state, indeed, they know no other way of combating starvation. They permit twofold, threefold and fourfold profits to be made by those who possess plenty of grain and who know how to profiteer and to turn organisation, rationing, regulation and distribution into profiteering. We do not wish to follow that course, *no matter who persuades us to do so, whether wittingly or unwittingly.* We shall say that we stood and shall continue to stand hand in hand with the class together with which we opposed the war, together with which we overthrew the bourgeoisie and together with which we are suffering the hardships of the present crisis. We must insist on the grain monopoly being observed, and must not legitimise capitalist profiteering, large or small, we must combat deliberate marauding.*

And here we see greater difficulties and greater dangers than those that faced us when we were confronted by tsarism armed to the teeth against the people, or when we were confronted by the Russian bourgeoisie, which was also armed to the teeth and which in the June offensive of last year did not consider it a crime to shed the blood of hundreds of thousands of Russian workers and peasants, having the secret treaties providing for participation in the division of spoils in its pocket, but which does consider a crime the war of the toilers against the oppressors, the only just and sacred war, of which we spoke from the very beginning of the imperialist slaughter and which events at every step are now inevitably associating with a famine.

We know that the tsarist autocracy from the very beginning instituted fixed prices for grain and raised those prices. Why not? It remained faithful to its allies, the grain merchants, the profiteers and the banking magnates who made millions out of it.

We know that the compromisers of the Cadet Party—together with the Socialist Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks—and Kerensky established a grain monopoly, for all Europe was saying that.

without a monopoly they could not hold out any longer. And we know how this same Kerensky in September (August) 1917 evaded the democratic law of the time. That is what democratic laws and artfully interpreted regimes are for, to be evaded. We know that in September (August) Kerensky doubled those prices and that the Socialists of all shades at that time protested against and resented this measure. There was not a single newspaper at the time that was not outraged by Kerensky's conduct and that did not expose the fact that behind the republican Ministers, behind the cabinet of Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries, were the manipulations of the profiteers, that the doubling of grain prices was a concession to the profiteers, that the whole business was nothing but a concession to the profiteers. We know that story.

We can now compare the course of the grain monopoly and of the fight against the famine in capitalist countries and in our country. We see what use the counter revolutionaries are making of it. We must draw definite and inflexible conclusions from this lesson. The course of events was such that the crisis, having reached the pitch of a severe famine, rendered the civil war still more acute. It only led to the exposure of parties like the Right Socialist Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks, who differ from that avowed capitalist party, the Cadets, only by the fact that the Cadet Party is an open party of the Black Hundreds. The Cadets are not obliged to address themselves to the people, they are not obliged to conceal their aims, whereas these parties, who compromised with Kerensky and shared the power and the secret treaties with him, are obliged to address themselves to the people. And so they are from time to time forced to expose themselves, despite their wishes and their plans.

When, as a result of the famine, we see on the one hand the outbreak of uprisings and revolts of starving people and on the other a train of counter revolutionary rebellions running from one end of Russia to the other,* obviously fed with funds from the Anglo-French imperialists, and the efforts of the Socialist Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks, we say the picture is clear and we leave it to whoever so desires to dream of united fronts.

And we now see very clearly that after the Russian bourgeoisie was defeated in open military conflict, all the open collisions between the revolutionary and counter revolutionary forces in the period from November (October) 1917 to February and March 1918 proved to the counter revolutionaries, even to the leaders of the Don Cossacks, in whom the greatest hopes had been placed, that their cause was lost, lost because everywhere the majority of the people were opposed to them. And every new attempt, even in the most patriarchal districts, where the agriculturists are most wealthy and most rigid in their system of social ranks, as, for instance, the Cossacks—every new attempt without exception has resulted in new strata of the oppressed toilers actually rising against them.

The experience of the civil war in the period from November (October) to March has shown that the toiling masses, the Russian working class and the peasants who live by their own labour and not by exploiting others, are all over Russia in their vast majority in favour of the Soviet power. But those who thought that we were already on the path of greater organic development were obliged to admit that they were mistaken.

The bourgeoisie saw that it was defeated. It has grown enfeebled, it has not sufficiently recovered, and no other forces can help it. And there begins a split among the Russian petty bourgeoisie: certain of them are drawn towards the Germans, others towards the Anglo-French orientation, while both have this in common, that they are united by the famine orientation.*

In order that it may be clear to you, comrades, that it is not our Party but its enemies and the enemies of the Soviet government who are reconciling the German orientation and the Anglo-French orientation and uniting them on a common programme, *viz* to overthrow the Soviet power as the result of famine—in order to make it clear how this is taking place, I will take the liberty of briefly quoting from the report of the recent conference of the Mensheviks.** This report appeared in the newspaper *Zhizn*.

From this report, printed in No. 26 of *Zhizn*, we learn that Cherevanin, who made a report on the question of economic policy, criticised the policy of the Soviet government and proposed a com-

promise solution of the problem—to enlist the service of representatives of merchant capital, as practical businessmen, to act as commission agents on terms which would be very favourable for them. We learn from this report that the chairman of the Northern Food Board, Groman, who was present at the conference, announced the following conclusions, which he had arrived at, so the report states, on the basis of a vast store of personal and of all sorts of other observations—observations, I would add, made entirely in bourgeois circles.

“Two methods,” he said, must be adopted: the first is that present prices must be raised, the second, that a special reward must be offered for prompt deliveries of grain,” etc.

[Voice: “What is wrong with that?”]

Ay, you will hear what is wrong with that, although the speaker, who has not received the floor, but has taken it from that corner over there, thinks he can convince you that there is nothing wrong with it. But he has presumably forgotten the course the Menshevik conference took. This same paper, *Zhuzn*, states that Groman was followed by the delegate Kolokolnikov, who expressed the same point of view.

“We are being invited to participate in the Bolshevik food organisations.”

Very wrong, is it not? That is what we have to say, recalling the interjection of the previous speaker. And if this speaker, who refuses to calm down and is taking the floor although he has not received it, cries out that it is a lie and that Kolokolnikov did not say that, I take note of the statement and request you to repeat that denial coherently and so that all may hear you. I take the liberty of recalling the resolution proposed at the conference by Martov, who is not unknown to you, who, speaking on the question of the Soviet government, literally says the same thing, although in different terms and phrases. Ay, however you may laugh at it, the fact remains that in connection with a report on the food situation Menshevik representatives say that the Soviet government is not a proletarian organisation, that it is a useless organisation.

And at such a time, when counter-revolutionary uprisings are breaking out owing to the famine, and taking advantage of the

famine, no denials and no artifices will avail, for the fact is obvious. We see the policy on this question effectively developed by Cherevanin, Groman and Kolokolnikov. The civil war is stirring, counter revolution is raising its head, and I am convinced that ninety nine hundredths of the Russian workers and peasants have drawn, are drawing and will draw their conclusion from these events—although not everybody yet knows this—and that this conclusion will be that only by smashing counter revolution, only by continuing a socialist policy in the matter of the famine, in the matter of combating the famine, shall we succeed in vanquishing both the famine and the counter revolutionaries who are taking advantage of the famine.

Comrades, we are in fact approaching a time when the Soviet power, after a long and severe struggle against numerous and serious counter revolutionary enemies, has defeated them in open conflict, and, after having overcome the military resistance of the exploiters and their sabotage, has definitely set about the task of organisation. This whole difficult struggle with famine and this whole tremendous problem is entirely to be explained by the fact that we have now definitely set about the task of organisation.

Success in an insurrection is infinitely more easy. It is a million times easier to defeat the resistance of counter revolution than to succeed in the sphere of organisation. This particularly applies to our solution of the problem, in which the insurgent proletariat and the small property owner, *i.e.*, the broad sections of the petty bourgeoisie, among whom there were many general democratic and general labour elements, could to a considerable extent join hands. We have now passed from this task to another. Acute starvation has driven us to a purely communist task. We are being confronted by a revolutionary socialist task. Incredible difficulties face us here.

We do not fear those difficulties. We were aware of them. We never said that the transition from capitalism to socialism would be easy. It will involve a whole era of violent civil war, it will involve taking painful measures, until such time as the detachment of the insurgent proletariat in one country is joined by the proletariat of another country in order to correct their mistakes by their joint efforts. The tasks that face us here are organisational tasks,

concerned with articles of general consumption, concerned with the deepest roots of profiteering and with the peaks of the bourgeois world and of capitalist exploitation, peaks which cannot be so easily removed by mere mass pressure. We have to deal here with the roots and runners of bourgeois exploitation, which have taken a deep or shallow hold all over the country in the form of the small property owners, their whole system of life, and in the habits and sentiments of the small property owner and the small master. We have to deal here with the small profiteer, with his unfamiliarity with the new system of life, his lack of faith in it and his despair.

For it is a fact that when they sensed the tremendous difficulties that confront us in the revolution, many members of the toiling masses gave way to despair. We do not fear that. There never has been a revolution anywhere in which certain sections of the population were not overcome by despair.

When the masses put out a certain disciplined vanguard, and that vanguard knows that this dictatorship, this firm government, will help to win over the poor peasants—this is a long process, involving a stern struggle—it is the beginning of the socialist revolution in the true sense of the term. But when we see that the united workers and the masses of poor peasants are opposing the rich and the profiteers, and the people to whom intellectuals like Gioman and Cherevanin are wittingly or unwittingly preaching profiteers' slogans, when the workers, led astray, advocate the free sale of grain and the import of freight transport, we say that this means helping the kulaks out of the hole. That path we shall never take. We declare that we shall rely on the toiling elements, with the help of whom we achieved the October victory, and that only together with our own class, and only by establishing proletarian discipline among all sections of the toiling population, shall we be able to solve the historic task now confronting us.

We shall have to overcome vast difficulties. We shall have to gather up all surpluses and stocks, properly distribute them and properly organise transportation for tens of millions of people. We shall have to see that the work proceeds with the regularity of clockwork. We shall have to overcome the chaos which is being

fostered by the profiteers and by the doubters, who are spreading panic. This task of organisation can be accomplished only by the class conscious workers, meeting the practical difficulties face to face. It is worth devoting all one's energies to this task. It is worth engaging in this last, decisive fight. And in this fight we shall win.

Comrades, the recent decrees on the measures taken by the Soviet government* show, as every Socialist who is a real Socialist, can see, that the path of the proletarian dictatorship will obviously and undoubtedly involve severe trials.

The recent decrees deal with the fundamental problem of life—bread. They are all inspired by three guiding ideas. The idea of centralisation—the union of everybody for the performance of the common task under the leadership of a centre. We must prove that we are serious and not give way to despondency—we must reject the services of the bag traders and merge all the forces of the proletariat, for in the struggle against the famine we rely on the oppressed classes and we see the solution only in their energetic resistance to all exploiters, in the unification of their activities.

Yes, we are told that the grain monopoly is being undermined by bag trading and profiteering on every hand. We frequently hear the intellectuals say that the bag traders are helping us, are feeding us. Yes, but the bag traders are feeding us as the kulaks are feeding us—they are acting just as it is necessary to act in order to establish, strengthen and perpetuate the power of the kulaks, in order that those who have power should with the help of their profits extend it through various individuals all around. And we assert that if the forces of those whose chief sin at the present moment is their lack of belief were to be united, the fight would be considerably easier. If there ever existed a revolutionary who hoped that we could pass to the socialist system without difficulties, such a revolutionary, such a Socialist, would not be worth a brass farthing.

We know that the transition from capitalism to socialism is a struggle of an extremely difficult kind. But we are prepared to overcome a thousand difficulties, we are prepared to make a thousand attempts, and having made a thousand attempts we shall go on to the next attempt. We are now enlisting all the Soviet organisations in this new creative life, we are getting them to dis-

play new energies We count on overcoming the new difficulties with the help of new strata, by organising the poor peasants And now I shall pass to the second main task

I have said that the first idea that runs through all these decrees is that of centralisation Only by collecting all the grain in one common sack shall we be able to overcome the famine And even then grain will barely suffice Nothing is left of Russia's former abundance, and all minds must be deeply imbued with communism, so that everybody should regard surplus grain as the property of the people and be alive to the interests of the toilers And this can be achieved only by the method proposed by the Soviet government

When they tell us of other methods, we reply as we did at the session of the Central Executive Committee. When they talked of other methods, we said Go to Skoropadsky! * You teach them your methods, such as raising grain prices or forming a *bloc* with the kulaks There you will find willing ears But the Soviet government says only one thing, that the difficulties are immense and you must respond to every difficulty by new efforts of organisation and discipline Such difficulties cannot be overcome in a single month There have been cases in the history of nations when decades were devoted to overcoming smaller difficulties, and these decades have gone down in history as great and fruitful decades You will never cause us to despond by referring to the failures of the first half year or the first year of a great revolution We shall continue to utter our old slogan of centralisation, unity and proletarian discipline on an all Russian scale

When they say to us, as Groman says in his report, that "the detachments you have sent to collect grain are taking to drink and are themselves becoming moonshiners and robbers," we reply that we are fully aware that this is all too frequently the case We do not conceal such facts, we do not whitewash them, we do not try to avoid them by pseudo-Left phrases and intentions Ay, the working class is not severed by a Chinese wall from the old bourgeois society And when a revolution takes place, it does not happen as in the case of the death of an individual, when the deceased person is simply removed When the old society perishes, you cannot nail

the corpse of bourgeois society into a coffin and lower it into the grave. It disintegrates in our midst, the corpse rots and poisons us.

There has not been and cannot be a single great revolution otherwise. What we have to combat in order to preserve and develop the sprouts of the new order in an atmosphere infested with the miasmas of a decaying corpse, the literature, the political situation, the play of political parties, which from the Cadets to the Mensheviks are infested with these miasmas of a decaying corpse—all this they intend to use against us and to put a spoke in our wheel. The socialist revolution can never be engendered in any other way, and not a single country can pass from capitalism to socialism except in an atmosphere of disintegrating capitalism and of painful resistance to the latter. And so we say that our first slogan is centralisation and our second slogan is the unity of the workers. *Workers, unite and unite again!* That is not new, it may not sound sensational or novel. It does not promise the specious successes with which such people as Kerensky are tempting you. In September (August) 1917, Kerensky doubled prices, just as the German bourgeois raised them to twice and even ten times their level. These people promise you direct and immediate successes, provided only you offer new inducements to the kulaks. Of course that is not the road we shall follow. We say that our second method may be an old method, but it is a permanent method. *Unite!*

We are in a difficult situation. The Soviet Republic is perhaps passing through one of its most arduous periods. New strata of workers will come to our aid. We have no police, we shall not have a special military caste, we have no other apparatus than the conscious unity of the workers. They will save Russia from her desperate and difficult situation. The workers must unite, workers' detachments must be organised, the hungry people from the non agricultural districts must be organised—it is to them we turn for help, it is to them our Commissariat of Food appeals, it is they we call upon to join the crusade for bread, the crusade against the profiteers and the kulaks and for the restoration of order.

The crusade was a campaign in which physical force was sup

plemented by faith in what centuries ago people were compelled by torture to regard as sacred. But we desire, we think, we are convinced, we know that the October Revolution has led the advanced workers and the advanced representatives of the poor peasants to regard the preservation of their power over the land lords and capitalists as sacred. They know that physical force is not enough to influence the masses of the population. We are building a dictatorship, we are applying force to the exploiters, and we shall cast aside with contempt all who fail to understand this, so as not to waste words in talking about the form of socialism.

We say that a new historical task is confronting us. We must get the new historical class to understand that we need detachments of agitators from among the workers. We need workers from the various districts of the non-producing gubernias. We need them to go thence as conscious advocates of Soviet government, they must sanctify and legitimise our food war, our war against the kulaks, our war against disorders, they must make possible the preaching of socialist propaganda, they must establish in the countryside the distinction between the poor and rich, which every peasant can understand and which is a profound source of our strength. It is a source which it is difficult to get to flow at full pressure, because the exploiters are numerous. And these exploiters resort to the most varied methods in order to subjugate the masses, such as bribing the poor peasants by permitting the latter to make money out of illicit distilling or to make a profit of several rubles on every ruble by selling at profiteering prices. Such are the methods which the kulaks and the rural bourgeoisie resort to in order to establish their influence over the masses.

We cannot blame the poor peasants for this, for we know that they have been enslaved for thousands of years, that they have suffered from serfdom and from the system which was left by serfdom in Russia. Our approach to the poor peasants must consist not only in the guns directed against the kulaks, but also in the propaganda of enlightened workers who bring the strength of their organisation into the countryside. Poor peasants, unite!—that is our third slogan. This is not making advances to the kulaks and it is not the senseless method of raising prices. If we were

to double prices, they would say "They are raising prices They are hungry Wait a bit, they will raise prices still higher"

It is a well beaten path, this path of playing up to the kulaks and profiteers It is easy to take this path and to hold out tempting prospects The intellectuals who call themselves Socialists are quite prepared to paint such prospects for us, and the number of such intellectuals is legion But we say to you Those who wish to follow the Soviet government, those who value it and regard it as a government of the toilers, as a government of the exploited class, on them we call to follow another path This new historical task is a difficult thing If we accomplish it, we shall raise a new stratum and give a new form of organisation to the toilers and exploited, who in their majority are downtrodden and ignorant, who are least united and have still to be united

All over the world the foremost ranks of the workers of the cities, the industrial workers, have united, and united unanimously But nowhere in the world has a systematic, supreme and self sacrificing attempt been made to unite those who are engaged in small scale agricultural production and, living in remote out of the-way places and in ignorance, have been stunted by their conditions of life The task that faces us here unites for one purpose both the fight against the food shortage and the fight for the profound and important system of socialism The fight for socialism with which we are now confronted is one to which it is worth devoting all our energies for which it is worth staking everything

In following this path we shall regard the toilers as our allies. Solid achievements await us in this path, not only solid, but also inalienable That is our third significant slogan

Such are the three fundamental slogans centralisation of food work, unity of the proletariat and organisation of the poor peasants And our appeal, the appeal of our Commissariat of Food, to the trade unions and the workshop committees says Things are going hard with you, comrades, then help us, join your efforts to ours, prosecute every violation of order and every evasion of the grain monopoly It is a difficult task, but fight bag trading, profiteering and the kulaks, again and again, a hundred times, a thousand times, and we shall win For this is the path into which

the majority of the workers are being led by the whole course of their lives and by the severity of our failures and trials in the matter of food supply. They know that whereas when there was still no absolute shortage of grain in Russia the shortcomings of the food supply organisation were corrected by individual and isolated actions, that can no longer be the case now. Only the joint effort and the unity of those who are suffering most in the hungry cities and gubernias can help us. That is the path the Soviet government is calling on you to follow—the unity of the workers of their vanguard, for the purpose of carrying on agitation in the villages and of waging a war for grain on the kulaks.

According to the calculations of the most cautious experts not far from Moscow, in nearby gubernias—Kursk, Orel and Tambov—there is still a surplus of up to ten million poods of grain. We are very far from able to collect this surplus for the common state fund.

Let us set about this task energetically. Let an enlightened worker go to every factory where despair is temporarily in the ascendant, and where, driven by hunger, people are prepared to accept the specious slogans of people who are reverting to the methods of Kerensky, to an increase of the fixed prices and let him say: "We see people who are despairing of the Soviet government. Join our detachments of militant agitators. Do not be dismayed by the many cases in which these detachments have disintegrated and succumbed to drink. We shall use every such example to show not that the working class is not fit, but that the working class has still not rid itself of the shortcomings of the old predatory society and cannot rid itself of them at once. Let us unite our forces, let us form dozens of detachments, let us combine their activities and in this way we shall get rid of our 'shortcomings'."

Comrades, allow me in conclusion to draw your attention to some of the telegrams which are being received by the Council of People's Commissars and particularly by our Commissariat of Food.

Comrades, in this matter of the food crisis, of the torments of hunger that are afflicting all our cities, we observe that, as the

proverb says, ill news travels fast I should like to read you certain documents which were received by the organs and institutions of the Soviet government after the issue of the decree of May 13 on the food dictatorship, in which it is stated that we continue to rely only on the proletariat The telegrams indicate that they are already proceeding in the localities to organise the crusade against the kulaks and to organise the poor peasants, as we proposed The telegrams we have received are proof of this

Let them blow their trumpets, let the raucous voice of the Cherevanins and the Gromans sow panic and demand the destruction and abolition of the Soviet government! He who is occupied with work will be least disturbed by this, he will see the facts, he will see that the work is progressing and that new ranks are forming and uniting

A new form of struggle against the kulaks is arising, namely, an alliance with the poor peasants, who need assistance and who need to be united It is proposed that awards be given for deliveries of grain, and we must try to help We are willing to make such awards to the poor peasants, and we have already begun to do so But towards the kulaks, the criminals who are subjecting the population to the torments of hunger, and on account of whom millions of people are suffering towards them we shall use force We shall give every possible inducement to the poor peasants, for they are entitled to it The poor peasant has for the first time obtained access to the good things of life, and we see that he is living more meagrely than the workers We shall give every possible inducement to the poor peasants and will help them if they help us to organise the collection of grain, to secure grain from the kulaks We must spare no means to make that a reality in Russia

We have already adopted this course, and it will be still further developed by the experience of every enlightened worker and by the new detachments

Comrades, the work has been started and is progressing We do not expect dazzling success, but success there certainly will be We know that we are now entering on a period of new destruction, *one of the most severe and difficult periods of the revolution* We are not in the least surprised that counter revolution is raising

its head, that the number of waverers and despairers in our ranks is growing. We say: Cease your vacillations, abandon your despair, of which the bourgeoisie will take advantage because it is to its interest to sow panic, get to work, with our food decrees and our plan based on the support of the poor peasants we are on the only right road. In the face of the new historical tasks we call upon you to make a new exertion of effort. This task is an infinitely difficult one, but, I repeat, it is an extremely thankful one. We are here fighting for the basis of communist distribution and for the actual creation of the foundations of a communist society. Let us all set to work. We shall vanquish the famine and achieve socialism.

TELEGRAM ON THE ORGANISATION OF FOOD DETACHMENTS ¹

IN view of the fact that it is too late to send a delegate from the Commissariat of Food to the congress, I request you to bring the following to the attention of the congress Members of the congress who support the Soviet government should remember, firstly, that the grain monopoly is being carried out simultaneously with a monopoly on textiles and on other of the chief articles of general consumption, and that, secondly, the demand for the abolition of the grain monopoly is a political move on the part of counter revolutionary strata, who are endeavouring to wrench from the hands of the revolutionary proletariat the system of monopoly regulation of prices, one of the most important implements for the gradual transition from capitalist exchange of commodities to socialist exchange of products Explain to the congress that as a method of combating the food shortage the abolition of the monopoly is not only useless but harmful, as is shown by the Ukraine, where Skoropadsky abolished the grain monopoly and as a result profiteering in grain within a few days achieved such proportions that the Ukrainian proletariat is now suffering from hunger far more acutely than under the monopoly

Point out that the only effective method of increasing bread rations is contained in the decision of the Council of People's Commissars to requisition grain forcibly from the kulaks and to distribute it among the poor of the city and the countryside This requires that the poor shall much more rapidly and resolutely enlist in the food army which is being created by the People's Commissariat of Food

Propose that the congress immediately undertake agitation among the workers to enlist in the food army formed by the Soviet of Deputies of Penza and to abide by the following rules

¹ See note to p 105 *—Ed

1) Every factory shall provide one person for every twenty five workers

2) Registration of those desiring to enlist in the food army shall be conducted by the factory committees, which shall draw up a list of the names of those mobilised, in two copies, one of which it shall deliver to the People's Commissariat of Food and the other it shall retain

3) To the list must be attached a guarantee given by the factory committee, or by the trade union organisation, or by a Soviet body, or by responsible representatives of Soviet organisations, of the personal honesty and revolutionary discipline of every candidate. The selection of members of the food army must be made so that subsequently there shall not be a single stain on the names of those who are setting out for the villages to combat the handful of predatory kulaks for the purpose of saving millions of toilers from starvation

Comrades workers, only if this condition is observed will it be obvious to all that the requisition of grain from the kulaks is not robbery but the fulfilment of a revolutionary duty to the worker and peasant masses who are fighting for socialism

4) In every factory those mobilised shall elect a representative from their midst to perform all the organisational measures necessary for the actual enrolment of the candidates of the factory as members of the food army by the People's Commissariat

5) Those enrolled in the army shall receive their former pay as well as food and equipment from the date of actual enlistment

6) Those enrolled in the army shall give a pledge that they will unreservedly carry out the instructions that may be given by the People's Commissariat of Food when detachments leave for their place of operation, and that they will obey the commissars of the detachments

I am certain that if convinced Socialists loyal to the October Revolution are placed at the head of the food requisition detachments, they will be able to organise Committees of Poor Peasants and together with them succeed in taking grain from the kulaks even without resort to armed force

June 27, 1918

TO THE WORKERS OF PETROGRAD ¹

DEAR COMRADES,

I am taking advantage of the fact that Comrade Kayurov, an old acquaintance of mine well known to the Petrograd workers, is leaving for Petrograd, to send you a few words

Comrade Kayurov has been in the Simbirsk Gubernia and has himself observed the attitude of the kulaks to the poor peasants and to our government. He has perfectly realised what no Marxist and no class conscious worker can doubt, namely, that the kulaks hate the Soviet government, the government of the workers, and *will infallibly overthrow* it if the workers do not *immediately* bend every effort to forestall the attack of the kulaks on the Soviets and to *smash* the kulaks before they can manage to unite

The class conscious workers *can* do this at the present moment, they can rally the poor peasants around themselves defeat the kulaks and smash them, *provided the vanguard* of the workers realise their duty, bend every effort and organise a *mass campaign into the rural districts*

Nobody but the workers of Petrograd can do this for there are no other workers in Russia as class conscious as the Petrograd workers. It is *foolish and criminal* to sit in Petrograd, starve, hang around idle factories and cherish the absurd dream of restoring Petrograd industry or defending Petrograd. That will mean the ruin of our revolution. The Petrograd workers must abandon such nonsense send packing those fools who advocate it, and set out in *tens of thousands* for the Urals, the Volga and the South, where there is an abundance of grain, where they can feed themselves and their families, where they *must* help the poor peasants to organise, and where the Petrograd worker is *indispensable*, as an organiser, guide and leader

¹ See note to p. 105 *—Ed

Kayurov will recount his personal observations, and, I am certain, will convince all waverers. The revolution is in danger. Only a *mass* campaign of the Petrograd workers can save it. Arms and money we shall not stint.

With Communist greetings,

LENIN

July 12, 1918

COMRADES WORKERS, ONWARD TO THE LAST DECISIVE FIGHT! ¹

THE Soviet Republic is surrounded by enemies. But it will defeat its enemies, both external and internal. A rising spirit is already perceptible among the working class masses which will ensure victory. We already see how frequent the sparks and flashes of the revolutionary conflagration in Western Europe have become, inspiring us with the assurance that the triumph of the international working class revolution is not far off.

The external foe of the Russian Soviet Socialist Republic at the present moment is Anglo French and American Japanese imperialism. This foe is attacking Russia: it is filching our territory, it has seized Archangel and (if the French newspapers are to be believed) has advanced from Vladivostok to Nikolsk Ussuriisk. This foe has bought over the generals and officers of the Czecho-Slovakian army. This enemy is attacking peaceable Russia with the ferocity and voracity of the Germans in February, the only difference being that the British and Japanese are out not only to seize and plunder Russian territory but also to overthrow the Soviet government so as to "restore the front," i.e., once more to draw Russia into the imperialist (or more simply the predatory) war being waged by England against Germany.*

The Anglo-Japanese capitalists want to restore the power of the landlords and capitalists in Russia in order to share with them the booty plundered in the war, they want to enslave the Russian workers and peasants to Anglo-French capital, to squeeze out of them interest on the billions advanced in loans and to quench the fire of socialist revolution which has broken out in our country and which is threatening to spread all over the world.

¹ See note to p. 105 *—Ed.

The Anglo Japanese imperialist brutes are not strong enough to occupy and subjugate Russia. Even neighbouring Germany is not strong enough for that, as was shown by her "experiment" in the Ukraine *. The British and Japanese thought to catch us unawares. They failed. The workers of Petrograd, followed by Moscow and Moscow by the Central Industrial Region, are rising, they are rising solidly, with growing persistence and courage and in ever larger numbers. That is a pledge of our victory.

In their attack on peaceable Russia the Anglo French capitalist plunderers are counting also on their alliance with the internal foe of Soviet government. We all know who that internal foe is. It is the capitalists, the landlords, the kulaks and their offspring, who hate the government of the workers and toiling peasants—the peasants who do not suck the blood of their fellow villagers.

A wave of kulak revolts is sweeping over Russia. The kulak cherishes a fierce hatred for Soviet government and is prepared to strangle and massacre hundreds of thousands of workers. We know very well that if the kulaks were to gain the upper hand they would ruthlessly slaughter hundreds of thousands of workers, would join in alliance with the landlords and capitalists restore penal conditions for the workers, abolish the eight hour day and once again place the mills and factories under the yoke of the capitalists.

Such was the case in all previous European revolutions when, as a result of the weakness of the workers, the kulaks succeeded in reverting from a republic to a monarchy, from government by the toilers to the despotism of the exploiters, the rich and the parasites **. This happened under our very eyes in Latvia, Finland, the Ukraine and Georgia. Everywhere the avaricious, bloated and bestial kulaks joined hands with the landlords and capitalists against the workers and against the poor generally. Everywhere the kulaks wreaked their vengeance on the working class with incredible ferocity. Everywhere they joined hands with the *foreign capitalists* against the workers of their own country. That is the way the Cadets, the Right Socialist Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks have been acting: we have only to remember their behaviour in "Czecho Slovakia". That is the way the Left Socialist

Revolutionaries in their crass stupidity and spinelessness acted when they revolted in Moscow, thus assisting the White Guards in Yaroslavl and the Czecho Slovaks and the Whites in Kazan. It was not without reason that the Left Socialist Revolutionaries were praised by Kerensky and his friends, the French imperialists.

Doubt is out of the question. The kulaks are rabid foes of Soviet government. Either the kulaks massacre vast numbers of workers, or the workers ruthlessly suppress the uprisings of the predatory kulak minority of the people against the government of the toilers. There can be no middle course. Peace is out of the question even if they have quarrelled, the kulak can easily come to terms with the landlord, the tsar and the priest but with the working class *never*.

That is why we call the fight against the kulaks the *last* decisive fight. That does not mean that there may not be many more kulak revolts, or that there may not be many attacks on the Soviet government by foreign capitalism. The word "*last*," the last struggle, implies that the last and most numerous of the *exploiting* classes has risen against us in our own country.

The kulaks are most brutal, callous and savage exploiters, who in the history of other countries have time and again restored the power of the landlords, tsars, priests and capitalists. The kulaks are more numerous than the landlords and capitalists. Nevertheless, the kulaks are a minority of the people.

Let us assume that there are fifteen million peasant households in Russia, taking Russia as she was before the bandits deprived her of the Ukraine and other territories. Of these fifteen million, probably ten million are poor peasants who live by the sale of their labour power, or who are in bondage to the rich, or who lack surpluses of grain and have been most impoverished by the burdens of war. About three million must be regarded as middle peasants, while barely two million consist of kulaks, rich peasants, profiteers in grain. These bloodsuckers have grown rich on the want suffered by the people in the war, they have raked in thousands and hundreds of thousands of rubles by screwing up the price of grain and other products. These spiders have grown fat at the expense of the peasants who have been ruined by the

war, at the expense of the hungry workers. These leeches sucked the blood of the toilers and grew richer as the workers in the cities and factories starved. These vampires have been gathering the landed estates into their hands, they are once more enslaving the poor peasants.

Ruthless war must be waged on the kulaks! Death to them! Hatred and contempt for the parties which support them—the Right Socialist Revolutionaries, the Mensheviks, and now the Left Socialist Revolutionaries! The workers must crush the kulak revolts with an iron hand, for the kulaks have formed an alliance with the foreign capitalists against the toilers of their own country.

The kulaks take advantage of the ignorance, the disunity and isolation of the poor peasants. They hound them against the workers. Sometimes they bribe them by permitting them to make a “profit” of a hundred rubles or so by profiteering in grain (at the same time robbing the poor peasants of many thousands of rubles). The kulaks try to win the support of the middle peasants, and sometimes they succeed.

But there is no reason why the working class should quarrel with the middle peasant. The working class cannot make peace with the kulak, but it may seek, and is seeking, an *agreement* with the middle peasant. The workers’ government, i.e., the Bolshevik government, has *proved* that in deed as well as in word.

We proved it by passing the law on the socialisation of the land and strictly carrying it into effect. That law contains numerous concessions to the interests and views of the middle peasant.

We proved that (the other day) by *trebling* bread prices,* for we fully realise that the earnings of the middle peasant do not conform with present day prices for manufactured goods and *must* be raised.

Every class conscious worker will explain this to the middle peasant and will patiently, persistently and repeatedly point out to him that socialism is infinitely more beneficial for the middle peasant than a government of tsars, landlords and capitalists.

The workers’ government has never injured and will never injure the middle peasant. But the government of the tsars, land

lords, capitalists and kulaks not only always injured the middle peasant, but deliberately stifled, plundered and ruined him. And this is true of every country without exception. Russia included.

Close alliance and complete fusion with the poor peasants, concessions and agreement with the middle peasants, ruthless suppression of the kulaks, those bloodsuckers, vampires, robbers of the people and profiteers, who have grown rich on starvation—such is the programme of the class conscious worker. Such is the policy of the working class.

August 1918

A LETTER TO THE WORKERS OF EI ETZ *

I HAVE received a cutting from one of the Eletz newspapers containing a report of a special meeting of the Eletz branch of the Party of Left Socialist Revolutionaries held on July 27. I see from this report that Mochenov reported on the Saratov conference of the Socialist Revolutionaries, where eight of the branches approved the tactics of their Central Committee, which were upheld by Mr Kolegayev, while thirteen branches demanded the reorganisation of the party and a change of tactics **

I note that at the Eletz meeting Comrade Radakov insisted that the party (the Left Socialist Revolutionaries) should be reorganised and its name changed, that it should be purged and that in no circumstances should it be allowed to disintegrate and perish. A certain Kryukov then alleged that he had spoken to representatives of the central government in Moscow and that Comrades Avanesov, Sverdlov and Bonch Bruyevich had declared that the existence of the Party of Left Socialist Revolutionaries was desirable for the Soviet government, he also alleged that in a conversation with him I had said the same thing and had stated that the Communists also had departed so far from all their former theories, from books, that they had no programme at the present moment, while in their platforms a great deal was indirectly borrowed from the theory of the Narodniki, and so on, and so forth.

I consider it my duty to state that this is pure fiction and that I have never spoken to any Kryukov. I earnestly request our comrades, the workers and peasants of the Eletz Uyezd,¹ to be extremely cautious of the Left Socialist Revolutionaries, who all too frequently say what is not true.

A few words, by the way, as to my view of them. Types like

¹ *Uyezd*—administrative area part of a gubernia.—*Ed Eng ed*

Kolegayev and the others are obviously pawns in the hands of the White Guards, the monarchists, the Savinkovs, who in Yaroslavl showed who was taking advantage of the revolt of the Left Socialist Revolutionaries * Their brainlessness and spinelessness brought Kolegayev and his friends to this pass—they deserved it! History will know them as “the servitors of Savinkov” But the facts show that among the Left Socialist Revolutionaries there are people (and in Saratov they are in the majority) who were ashamed of this brainlessness and spinelessness, of playing the part of servitors to monarchism and the interests of the land lords If these people desire even to change the name of their party (I have heard that they want to call themselves “Village Commune Communists” or “Narodnik Communists,” etc), that is only to be welcomed

The pure ideological basis of this Narodism, an alliance with which the Bolshevik Communists have never rejected, is firstly disagreement with Marxism, and secondly, complete agreement with the theory of “equal land tenure” (and with the law on equal land tenure)

We favour such an alliance such an agreement with the middle peasants, for we worker Communists have no grounds for quarrelling with the middle peasants and are prepared to make them a number of concessions We have proved this, and we proved it not only in word but in deed because we have been carrying out the law on the socialisation of the land with absolute loyalty, despite the fact that not all are in agreement with it We have generally been in favour of waging ruthless war on the kulaks, but we are also in favour of an agreement with the middle peasantry and of fusion with the poor peasantry An agreement with the middle peasantry must not be understood as necessarily implying agreement with the Left Socialist Revolutionaries Nothing of the kind

We passed the law on socialisation at a time when we had no agreement with the Left Socialist Revolutionaries, and this law, in fact, is an expression of our agreement with the middle peasant, with the peasant masses, and not with the Left Socialist Revolutionary intellectuals

Comrades, workers and peasants, do not be eager for an agreement with the Left Socialist Revolutionaries, for we have seen and suffered from their unreliability. Spread communism among the poor peasants, the majority will be on our side. Try to make concessions to the middle peasants, treat them as tactfully and as fairly as possible, because we can and should make concessions to the middle peasants. Be ruthless in your attitude towards the insignificant handful of exploiters, including the kulaks and the grain profiteers, who are growing rich on the misfortunes of the people and the starvation of the working class masses—towards the handful of kulaks who are sucking the blood of the toilers.

V ULYANOV (N. LENIN)

Moscow August 6 1918

SPEECH DELIVERED TO DELEGATES FROM THE COM
MITTEES OF POOR PEASANTS OF THE
MOSCOW REGION

*November 8, 1918 **

COMRADES, the organisation of the poor peasants faces us as the most important problem in our work of internal construction, and even in our whole revolution

The aim of the October Revolution was to wrench the mills and factories from the hands of the capitalists so as to make the means of production the property of the whole people and to reconstruct agriculture on socialist lines by handing over the whole land to the peasants

The first half of this aim was much more easy to accomplish than the second. In the cities, the revolution dealt with large scale industry in which hundreds of thousands of workers are engaged. The mills and factories belonged to a small number of capitalists, with whom the workers had no difficulty in coping. The workers had already gained experience in their long struggle against the capitalists, which had taught them to act concertedly, resolutely and in an organised way. Moreover, it was not necessary to divide up the mills and factories, all that was required was that all production should be made to serve the interests of the working class and the peasantry and that the products of labour should not fall into the hands of the capitalists.

But the case is entirely different with the land. Here, in order to secure the success of socialism a number of transitional measures are required. To transform a vast number of small scale peasant farms into large scale production is something that cannot be done immediately. Agriculture, which hitherto has been conducted on individual lines, cannot immediately be socialised and transformed into large scale state enterprises, the products of

which would be equally and justly distributed among the whole of the toiling people under a system of universal and equal labour service. It is impossible, of course, to achieve this immediately, or in a short space of time.

While the workers of the mills and factories in the cities have already succeeded in completely overthrowing the capitalists and casting off the yoke of exploitation, in the agricultural districts the real fight against exploitation has only just begun.

After the October Revolution we smashed the landlord and deprived him of his land. But that did not end the struggle in the agricultural districts. The conquest of the land, like every other conquest by the toilers, can be permanent only when it is based on the independent action of the toilers themselves, on their own organisation, on their endurance and revolutionary determination.

Did the toiling peasants have this organisation?

Unfortunately not, and that is the root cause, the reason why the struggle is so difficult.

Peasants who do not employ the labour of others, who do not profit at the expense of others, will, of course, always be in favour of the land being divided among everybody equally; they will always be in favour of everybody working, of the possession of land not serving as a basis of exploitation, and of numerous land holdings not therefore becoming concentrated in single hands. But it is different with the kulaks and the parasites who grew rich on the war, who took advantage of the famine to sell grain at fabulous prices, who concealed grain in expectation of higher prices, and who are now striving in every way to grow rich on the misfortunes of the people and on the hunger of the poor peasants and the workers in the cities.

They, the kulaks and parasites, are enemies no less formidable than the capitalists and landlords. And if the kulaks are not dealt with, if we do not cope with the parasites, the return of the tsar and the capitalists is inevitable.

The experience of every revolution that has hitherto occurred in Europe offers striking corroboration of the fact that revolution is inevitably doomed if the peasants do not throw off the domination of the kulaks.

Every European revolution ended in failure because the peasants could not cope with their enemies. In the cities the workers overthrew their kings (in England and France they executed their kings several centuries ago, it was only we who were late with our tsar), yet after a certain interval the old order was restored. That was because in those days even in the cities there was no large scale industry which could unite millions of workers in the mills and factories and consolidate them into an army powerful enough to withstand the onslaught of the capitalists and the kulaks even without the support of the peasants.

The poor peasants were unorganised, fought the kulaks badly, and as a result the revolution was defeated even in the cities.

But now the situation is different. During the last two hundred years large scale production has developed so powerfully and has covered all the countries with such a network of huge mills and factories employing tens of thousands of workers that now everywhere in the cities large cadres have been created of organised workers, the proletariat, who constitute a force strong enough to achieve final victory over the bourgeoisie, the capitalists.

In former revolutions the poor peasants had nowhere to turn for support in their difficult struggle against the kulaks.

The organised proletariat—which is stronger and more experienced than the peasantry (it gained that experience in earlier struggles)—is now in power in Russia and is in possession of all the means of production, the mills, the factories, the railroads, ships etc.

The poor peasants now possess a reliable and powerful ally in their struggle against the kulaks. The poor peasants know that the city is behind them, that the proletariat will help them, is in fact already helping them with every means in its power. That has been shown by recent events.*

You remember, comrades, in what a dangerous situation the revolution was in July of the present year. The Czecho-Slovakian rebellion was spreading, the food shortage in the cities was becoming increasingly acute and the kulaks in the villages were becoming more and more insolent and more and more violent.

in their attacks on the cities, the Soviet government and the poor peasants

We called on the poor peasants to organise. We proceeded to form committees and to organise workers' food detachments. The Left Socialist Revolutionaries raised a revolt. They declared that the Committees of Poor Peasants consisted of idlers and that the workers were robbing the toiling peasants of grain.

And we replied that they were defending the kulaks, who realised that the Soviet government could be fought not only by arms but also by starvation. They talked about "idlers." And we asked, "But why has any particular individual become an 'idler,' why has he deteriorated, why is he impoverished, and why has he taken to drink? Was it not because of the kulaks?" The kulaks, like the Left Socialist Revolutionaries, raised an outcry against "idlers," but they themselves were raking in grain, concealing it and profiteering in the desire to grow rich on the hunger and sufferings of the workers.

The kulaks were squeezing the poor peasants dry. They were deriving advantage from the labour of others, at the same time crying, "Idlers!"

The kulaks awaited the Czechoslovakians impatiently. They would most willingly have enthroned a new tsar, in order to continue their exploitation with impunity, in order to continue to dominate the farm labourer and to continue to grow rich.

And salvation was wholly due to the fact that the village united with the city, that the proletarian and semi-proletarian elements of the countryside (i.e., those who do not employ the labour of others) started a campaign against the kulaks and the parasites together with the city workers.

In order to achieve this unity a great deal had particularly to be done in connection with the food situation. The working class population of the cities was suffering severely from hunger, but the kulak said "I shall hold back my grain a little longer, perhaps they will pay more."

The kulaks, of course, were in no hurry, they had money in plenty, they say themselves that they have accumulated Kerensky notes by the pound weight.

But people who at a time of famine are capable of concealing and hoarding grain are vicious criminals. They must be fought as the worst enemies of the people.

And this fight in the country districts we have begun.

The Mensheviks and the Socialist Revolutionaries tried to frighten us by asserting that in organising the Committees of Poor Peasants we were "causing a split" among the peasants. But what does not "causing a split" among the peasants mean? It means leaving them to the mercy of the kulak. But that is exactly what we do not want, and we therefore decided to "cause a split" among the peasants. We said: True, we are losing the kulaks, that misfortune cannot be concealed, but we shall win millions of poor peasants who will come over to the side of the workers.

And that is exactly what is taking place. The split among the peasants only served to show more clearly who are poor peasants, who are middle peasants not employing the labour of others, and who are parasites and kulaks.

The workers have helped and are helping the poor peasants in their struggle against the kulaks. In the civil war which has broken out in the countryside the workers are on the side of the poor peasants, as they were when they passed the Socialist Revolutionary law on the socialisation of the land.

We Bolsheviks were opposed to the law on the socialisation of the land. Yet we signed it, because we did not wish to go counter to the will of the majority of the peasantry. The will of the majority is binding on us always, and to oppose the will of the majority is to betray the revolution.

We did not desire to force on the peasants the idea that the equal division of the land was useless, an idea which was alien to them. We considered it better if the toiling peasants themselves, as a result of their own experience and their own suffering, came to realise that equal division was nonsense. Only then would we be able to ask them what, then, was the way of escape from the ruin and kulak domination that follow from the division of the land.

Division of the land was all very well as a beginning. Its purpose was to show that the land was being taken from the

landlords and handed over to the peasants. But that is not enough. The solution lies only in social cultivation of the land.

This was not realised at the time, but we are being led to this conviction by force of experience. Salvation from the disadvantages of small scale farming lies in communes, cultivation by artels, or peasant associations. That is the way to raise and improve agriculture, to economise forces and to combat the kulaks, parasites and exploiters.

We were well aware that the peasants live rooted to the soil. The peasants fear innovations, they cling tenaciously to old habits. We knew that the peasants would come to believe in the benefits of any particular measure only when their own intelligence led them to understand and appreciate those benefits. And that is why we helped to divide the land, although we realised that this was not the solution.

But now the poor peasants themselves are coming to agree with us. Experience is teaching them that while ten ploughs say, are required when the land is divided into one hundred separate holdings, a smaller number of ploughs suffices under communal farming because the land is not divided up so minutely. A commune permits a whole artel, or association, to make improvements in agriculture which are beyond the capacity of individual small owners, and so forth.

Of course, not everywhere will it be possible to proceed to social cultivation of the land immediately. The kulaks will resist it in every way—ay, and frequently the peasants themselves will stubbornly resist the introduction of communal principles in agriculture. But the more the peasants become convinced by example and by their own experience of the advantages of communes, the more successfully will matters progress.

In this respect the Committees of Poor Peasants will play an extremely important part. Committees of Poor Peasants must cover the whole of Russia. For some time now, the development of the Committees of Poor Peasants has been proceeding intensively. The other day a Congress of Committees of Poor Peasants of the Northern Region was held in Petrograd. In place of the seven thousand representatives expected, twenty thousand actually ap-

peared, and the hall assigned for the purpose was unable to seat all present. The situation was saved by the fine weather, which made it possible to hold the meeting on the square outside the Winter Palace *.

This congress showed that the civil war in the countryside is being properly understood: the poor peasants are uniting and have formed solid ranks against the kulaks, the rich and the parasites.

The Central Committee of our Party has drawn up a plan for the reformation of the Committees of Poor Peasants which will be submitted for the approval of the Sixth Congress of Soviets **. We have decided that the Committees of Poor Peasants and the Soviets in the rural districts must not exist separately, for otherwise there will be squabbling and too much useless talk. We shall merge the Committees of Poor Peasants with the Soviets, we shall turn the Committees of Poor Peasants into Soviets.

We know that the kulaks sometimes worm their way even into the Committees of Poor Peasants. If this continues the poor peasants will have the same sort of attitude towards the Committees of Poor Peasants as they had towards the kulak Soviets of Keren'sky and Avksentyev. A change of name will fool nobody. It is therefore proposed to hold new elections to the Committees of Poor Peasants. Only those who do not exploit the labour of others, who do not make the hunger of the people a source of plunder, who do not profiteer on grain surpluses and do not conceal them, will be entitled to vote in the elections to the Committees of Poor Peasants. There must be no place for kulaks and parasites in the proletarian Committees of Poor Peasants.

The Soviet government has decided to assign one billion rubles to a special fund for the improvement of agriculture ***. All existing communes and all new communes will receive monetary and technical assistance.

We shall send trained experts if they are required. Although the majority of them are counter-revolutionary, the Committees of Poor Peasants will be able to harness them and they will work for the people no worse than they formerly worked for the exploiters. And generally our intellectuals have already become

convinced that they will not overthrow the workers' government by sabotage and by wilful damage to work

Foreign imperialism also has no terrors for us Germany has already burnt her fingers in the Ukraine¹ In place of the sixty million poods of grain which Germany hoped to secure in the Ukraine, she got only nine million poods, and, in addition she got Russian Bolshevism, for which she cherishes no particular sympathies The British should take care the same thing does not happen to them, and we can say to them "Beware, friends, you don't choke yourselves!"

But the danger for us continues to exist as long as our brothers abroad have not everywhere risen And we must therefore continue to organise and consolidate our Red Army The poor peasants should be particularly concerned in this matter, for they can carry on their domestic activities only under the protection of our army

Comrades, the transition to the new form of agriculture may perhaps proceed slowly, but the beginnings of communal farming must be carried into practice unswervingly

The fight against the kulaks must be fought energetically, no deals must be made with them

We can work with the middle peasants, and together with them fight the kulaks We have nothing against the middle peasants They are, perhaps, not Socialists, and never will be Socialists, but experience will teach them the advantages of the social cultivation of the land and the majority of them will not resist

To the kulaks we say We have nothing against you either, but hand over your surplus grain, do not profiteer and do not exploit the labour of others Until that is done we shall wage ruthless war on you We are taking nothing from the toilers, but those who employ hired labour, who grow rich at the expense of others, we shall expropriate completely

¹ See note to p 129 *—Ed

VALUABLE ADMISSIONS BY PITIRIM SOROKIN *

"PRAVDA" today gives space to a remarkably interesting letter by Pitirim Sorokin,** to which the attention of all Communists should be particularly drawn. In this letter, which was printed in the *Izvestiya of the North Dvina Executive Committee*, Pitirim Sorokin announces his resignation from the Party of the Right Socialist Revolutionaries and his abjuration of the title of member of the Constituent Assembly. The motives of the author of the letter are that he finds difficulty in providing effective political recipes, not only for others, but even for himself, and that therefore he "renounces all politics." Pitirim Sorokin writes

"The past year of revolution has taught me one truth: politicians may make mistakes, politics may be socially useful but may also be socially harmful, whereas work in the sphere of science and public education is always useful and is always needed by the people."

The letter is signed

"Lecturer in the Petrograd University and the Psycho-Neurological Institute, former Member of the Constituent Assembly and former Member of the Party of Socialist Revolutionaries, Pitirim Sorokin"

This letter is deserving of attention in the first place because it is an extremely interesting "human document." We do not often meet with such sincerity and frankness as are displayed by P. Sorokin in admitting the mistakenness of his politics. In practice the majority of cases politicians who become convinced that the line they have been pursuing is erroneous endeavour to conceal their change of front, to hush it up and to invent more or less extraneous motives. A frank and honest admission of one's political error is in itself an important political act. Pitirim Sorokin is wrong when he says that work in the sphere of science "is always useful." For mistakes are made even in this sphere, and there are examples even in Russian literature of the obstinate

advocacy of, for instance, reactionary philosophical views by people who themselves are obviously not reactionary. On the other hand, a frank declaration by a prominent person—*i.e.*, a person who occupies a responsible political post known to the people at large—of his abjuration of politics *is in itself politics*. An honest confession of a political error may be of great political benefit to many people, if the error was shared by whole parties which at one time enjoyed influence over the masses.

The political significance of Pitirim Sorokin's letter is very great precisely at the present moment. It is a "lesson" which should be carefully pondered over and mastered by everybody.

It is a truth long known to every Marxist that in every capitalist society the only *decisive* forces are the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, while all social elements occupying a position midway between these classes and coming within the economic category of the petty bourgeoisie *inevitably* vacillate between these decisive forces. But there is an enormous gulf between an academic recognition of this truth and the ability to draw the conclusions that follow from it in the complex conditions of practical reality.

Pitirim Sorokin is representative of an extremely broad public and political current, the Menshevik Socialist Revolutionary current. That this is a single current, that the difference between the Mensheviks and the Socialist Revolutionaries in their attitude towards the struggle of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat is insignificant, is convincingly and strikingly borne out by the events in the Russian revolution since March (February) 1917. The Mensheviks and the Socialist Revolutionaries are varieties of petty bourgeois democrats—that is the economic essence and fundamental political characteristic of the current in question. We know from the history of the advanced countries how frequently this current in its early stages assumes a "Socialist" hue.

The question arises: What was it that several months ago so forcibly repelled the representatives of this current from the Bolsheviks and from the proletarian revolution, and what is it that is now inducing them to change from hostility to neutrality? It is quite obvious that the cause of this change was, firstly the

collapse of German imperialism as the result of the revolution in Germany and other countries and of the showing up of Anglo-French imperialism, and, secondly, the dispelling of bourgeois democratic illusions

Let us deal with the first cause Patriotism is one of the most deeply ingrained of sentiments, inculcated by the fact that separate fatherlands have existed for hundreds and thousands of years One of the most pronounced, one might say exceptional, difficulties of our proletarian revolution is the fact that it was obliged to pass through a phase of extreme departure from patriotism, the phase of the Peace of Brest Litovsk The bitterness, fury and fierce disgust provoked by this peace were easy to understand and it goes without saying that we Marxists could expect only the class conscious vanguard of the proletariat to appreciate the truth, namely, that we were making and were obliged to make great national sacrifices for the sake of the supreme interests of the world proletarian revolution There was no source from which ideologists who are not Marxists and the broad masses of the toilers who do not belong to the proletariat—which has been trained in the long school of strikes and revolution—could derive either the firm conviction that the revolution was developing, or an unreserved devotion to the revolution At best, our tactics appeared to them a fantastic, fanatical and adventurist sacrifice of the immediate and obvious interests of hundreds of millions for the sake of an abstract, utopian and dubious hope of something that might occur in other countries And the petty bourgeoisie, owing to its economic position, is more patriotic than the bourgeoisie and more patriotic than the proletariat

But it turned out as we had foretold

German imperialism, which had seemed to be the only enemy, collapsed The German revolution, which had appeared to be a "dream farce" (to use Plekhanov's expression), became a fact. Anglo-French imperialism, which the fantasy of the petty bourgeois democrats pictured as a friend of democracy and a protector of the oppressed, turned out to be a savage beast, which forced on the German Republic and the peoples of Austria terms worse than the terms of the Peace of Brest Litovsk, a

savage beast which used armies of "free" republicans—French and American—as gendarmes, butchers and throttlers of the independence and freedom of small and feeble nationalities Anglo French imperialism was exposed by world history with ruthless thoroughness and frankness The facts of world history demonstrated to the Russian patriots, who formerly would hear of nothing that was not to the direct advantage (as formerly understood) of their country, that the transformation of our Russian revolution into a socialist revolution was not a dubious venture but a necessity, *for there was no other alternative* Anglo French and American imperialism would *inevitably* have destroyed the independence and freedom of Russia *if* the world socialist revolution, world Bolshevism, had not triumphed

Facts are stubborn things, the English proverb says And during the last three months we have witnessed facts that signify a definite turning point in world history These facts are compelling the petty bourgeois democrats of Russia, in spite of their hatred of Bolshevism, inculcated by the history of our internal Party struggle, to turn from their hostility to Bolshevism, first to neutrality towards and then to support of Bolshevism The objective conditions which repelled these democratic patriots from us most strongly have now vanished World objective conditions are now such as *to compel them* to turn towards us Pitirim Sorokin's change of front is by no means fortuitous, but rather the symptom of an inevitable change of front on the part of a *whole class*, of the whole petty bourgeois democracy Whoever fails to reckon with this fact and to take advantage of it is not a Marxist but a bad Socialist

Furthermore, faith in "democracy" *in general* as a universal panacea, and failure to understand that this democracy is *bourgeois* democracy, historically limited in its efficacy and its necessity, have for decades and centuries held particularly strong sway over the petty bourgeoisie of all countries The big bourgeois is case hardened, he knows that under capitalism a democratic republic, like every other form of state, is nothing but a machine for the suppression of the proletariat The big bourgeois *knows* this from his intimate acquaintance with the real leaders and with

the most profound (and therefore frequently the most concealed) springs of *every* bourgeois state machine. The petty bourgeois, owing to his economic position and his conditions of life generally, is less able to appreciate this truth, and even cherishes the illusion that a democratic republic implies "pure democracy" "a free people's state," the non class or supra class rule of the people, a pure manifestation of the will of the people, and so on and so forth. The tenacity of these prejudices of the petty bourgeois democrat is inevitably due to the fact that he is farther removed from the acute class struggle, the bourse, and "real" politics, and it would be absolutely un-Marxian to expect that these prejudices can be eradicated very rapidly by propaganda alone.

But world history is moving with such furious rapidity, is smashing everything customary and established with a hammer of such immense weight and by crises of such unparalleled intensity, that the most tenacious prejudices are giving way. The naive belief in a Constituent Assembly and the naive habit of contrasting "pure democracy" with "proletarian dictatorship" grew up naturally and inevitably in the mind of the "democrat" in general. But the experiences of the Constituent Assembly supporters in Archangel, Samara, Siberia and the South could not but destroy even the most tenacious of prejudices *. The idealised democratic republic of Wilson proved in practice to be a form of the most rabid imperialism, of the most shameless oppression and suppression of weak and small nationalities. The average "democrat" in general, the Menshevik and the Socialist Revolutionary, thought "How can we even dream of a superior type of government, a Soviet government? God grant us even an ordinary democratic republic!" And, of course, in "ordinary," comparatively peaceful times such a "hope" would have lasted for many a long decade.

But now the course of world events and the bitter lessons derived from the alliance of the Russian monarchists with Anglo-French and American imperialism are proving *in practice* that a democratic republic is a bourgeois democratic republic, which has already become antiquated from the point of view of the problems which imperialism has placed on the agenda of history. They show that there is no *other* alternative *either* the Soviet

government triumphs in every advanced country in the world, or the most reactionary imperialism triumphs, the most savage imperialism, which is throttling the small and feeble nationalities and reinstating reaction all over the world—Anglo American imperialism, which has perfectly mastered the art of using the form of a democratic republic

One or the other

There is no middle course

Until quite recently this view was regarded as the blind fanaticism of the Bolsheviks

But it turned out to be true

If Pitirim Sorokin has abjured the title of member of the Constituent Assembly, it is not without reason, it is a symptom of a change of front on the part of a whole class, the petty bourgeois democracy. A split among this class is inevitable: one section will come over to our side, another section will remain neutral, while a third will deliberately join forces with the monarchist Cadets, who are selling Russia to Anglo American capital and endeavouring to crush the revolution with the aid of foreign bayonets. One of the most urgent tasks of the present day is to realise and take advantage of the fact that the Menshevik and Socialist Revolutionary democrats have turned from hostility to Bolshevism, first to neutrality and then to support of Bolshevism.

Every slogan issued by the Party to the masses tends to become frozen and lifeless, to retain its validity for many people even when the conditions which rendered that slogan necessary have changed. That is an unavoidable evil, and it is impossible to give the Party a correct policy unless we learn to combat and overcome that evil. The period in our proletarian revolution in which the differences with the Menshevik and Socialist Revolutionary democrats were particularly acute was a historically necessary period. It was impossible to avoid waging vigorous war on these democrats when they swung to the camp of our enemies and started to undertake the restoration of a *bourgeois and imperialist democratic republic*. Many of the slogans of this war have now become frozen and petrified and *prevent* us from properly realising and taking effective advantage of the new period in which a change

of front has begun among these democrats, a change in our direction, not a fortuitous change, but one rooted in the profound conditions of the international situation

It is not enough to encourage this change of front and amicably greet those who are making it. A politician who realises his duty must learn to *provoke* this change of front among the various sections and groups of the broad mass of the petty bourgeois democracy, if he is convinced that serious and profound historical causes for such a change of front exist. A revolutionary proletarian must know whom to suppress and with whom—and when and how—to conclude agreements. It would have been ridiculous and foolish to refrain from employing terror against and suppressing the landlords and capitalists and their henchmen, who were selling Russia to the foreign imperialist Allies. It would have been farcical to attempt to “convince” or generally to “psychologically influence” them. But it would be equally foolish and ridiculous—if not more so—to insist only on tactics of suppression and terror in relation to the petty bourgeois democrats when they are being induced by the course of events to turn in our direction.

And the proletariat encounters these democrats everywhere. Our task in the rural districts is to destroy the landlord and smash the resistance of the exploiter and the kulak profiteer. For this purpose we can safely rely *only* on the semi-proletarians, the “poor peasants.” But the middle peasant is not our enemy. He vacillates, is vacillating and will continue to vacillate. The task of influencing the vacillators is *not identical* with the task of overthrowing the exploiter and defeating the active enemy. The task at the present moment is to come to an agreement with the middle peasant, while not for a moment renouncing the struggle against the kulak and at the same time relying solely on the poor peasant, for a change in our direction on the part of the middle peasants is now inevitable owing to the causes above enumerated.

This applies equally to the handicraftsman, the artisan, and the worker whose conditions are most petty bourgeois, or who has most preserved petty bourgeois views, and to many office workers and army officers, and, in particular, to the intellectuals generally. It is undoubted that we frequently observe in our Party an ina-

bility to take advantage of this change of front among them and that this inability can and must be overcome and transformed into ability

We already have a firm basis of support among the vast majority of the proletarians organised in the trade unions. We must know how to win over the least proletarian and most petty bourgeois sections of the *toilers*, who are turning towards us, to include them in the general organisation and to subject them to the general proletarian discipline. The slogan of the moment here is not to fight these sections, but to win them over, to be able to influence them, to convince the waverers, to make use of those who are neutral, and, by mass proletarian influence to train those who are lagging behind or who have only very recently begun to emancipate themselves from "Constituent Assembly" and "parliamentary democratic" illusions.

We already have a sufficiently firm basis of support among the toiling masses. This was strikingly borne out by the Sixth Congress of Soviets. We are not afraid of the bourgeois intellectuals, but we shall not for a moment relax the struggle against the deliberate saboteurs and White Guards among these intellectuals. But the slogan of the moment is to make use of this change of attitude towards us which is taking place among them. There are still left not a few of the worst representatives of the bourgeois intelligentsia who have wormed themselves into Soviet office. To cast them out, to replace them by intellectuals who recently were deliberately hostile to us but who are now neutral—that at the present moment is one of the most important duties of every active Soviet worker who comes into contact with the "intelligentsia," it is the duty of every agitator, propagandist and organiser.

Of course, like every political action taken in a complex and rapidly changing situation, achieving an agreement with the middle peasantry, with the workers who were recently Mensheviks and with the office workers and intellectuals who were yesterday saboteurs, requires skill. The whole point is not to rest content with the skill we acquired by our previous experience, but absolutely to go on, absolutely to strive for something bigger, absolutely

to proceed from simple tasks to more difficult tasks. Otherwise, no progress whatever is possible, and in particular no progress is possible in socialist construction.

The other day I was visited by representatives from a congress of delegates of credit co-operative societies. They showed me a resolution adopted by their congress protesting *against the merger* of the Credit Co-operative Bank with the People's Bank of the Republic. I told them that I stood for agreement with the middle peasantry and highly valued even the beginnings of a change in attitude from hostility to neutrality towards the Bolsheviks on the part of the co-operatives, but the basis for an agreement could be created only by their consent to the complete merger of their special bank with the united Bank of the Republic. The representatives of the congress thereupon replaced their resolution by another, which they had the congress adopt, and in which every thing hostile to the merger was deleted, but—it proposed a plan for a *special* "credit union" of co-operators, which in fact differed in no way from a special bank! That was funny. Only a fool, of course, will be deceived by verbal retouchings. But the "failure" of one of these "attempts" will not affect our policy in the least: we have pursued and will pursue a policy of agreement with the co-operators and the middle peasants, at the same time suppressing every attempt to change the *line* of the Soviet government and of Soviet socialist construction.

Vacillation on the part of the petty bourgeois democrats is inevitable. It required only a few successes of the Czecho-Slovakians and these democrats fell into a panic, began to spread panic, hastened to the side of the "victors" and greeted them servilely. Of course, it must not for a moment be forgotten that it requires only the partial success of, let us say, the Anglo-American, Krasnov, White Guards, and vacillations in the other direction will begin, panic will become intensified and cases of the dissemination of panic of treachery and desertion to the imperialists, and so on and so forth, will be multiplied.

We are aware of that. We shall not forget it. The pure proletarian basis for the Soviet government, supported by the semi-proletarians, which we have achieved, will remain firm and

unchangeable Our troops will not falter, our army will not waver—that we already know from experience But when profound historical changes induce an inevitable change of front in our direction among the mass of non party, Menshevik and Socialist Revolutionary democrats, we must learn and shall learn to take advantage of this change of front, to encourage it, to provoke it among appropriate groups and strata, to do everything possible to reach agreement with these elements and thus facilitate the work of socialist construction and mitigate the severities of the painful disruption, the ignorance and the lack of ability which are delaying the victory of socialism

November 21, 1918

SPEECH DELIVERED AT THE FIRST ALL RUSSIAN CON-
GRESS OF LAND DEPARTMENTS, COMMITTEES OF
POOR PEASANTS AND COMMUNES *

December 11, 1918

COMRADES, the composition of this congress, in my opinion, is in itself an indication of the profound change and the great progress that has been made by us, the Soviet Republic, in the work of socialist construction, and in particular in the sphere of agricultural relations, which are of the utmost importance to our country. The present congress embraces representatives of the Land Departments, the Committees of Poor Peasants and the agricultural communes, a combination which shows that within a short space of time, within the space of a single year, our revolution has made great strides in reconstructing those relations whose reconstruction presents the greatest difficulties, relations which in all previous revolutions constituted the greatest hindrance to the cause of socialism, and which require to be most profoundly reconstructed in order to ensure the triumph of socialism.

The first stage, the first period in the development of our revolution after October, was mainly devoted to defeating the common enemy of the peasantry as a whole, namely, the landlords.

Comrades, you are all very well aware of the fact that even the February Revolution—the revolution of the bourgeoisie, the revolution of the compromisers—promised the peasants this defeat of the landlords, and that this promise was not fulfilled. It was only the October Revolution, it was only the victory of the working class in the cities, it was only Soviet government that enabled the whole of Russia, from end to end, to be cleared of that ulcer, the heritage of the old feudal system, the old feudal exploitation, the large landed estates and the oppression exercised by the landlords.

over the peasantry as a whole, over all the peasants without distinction

This fight against the landlords was one in which all the peasants were bound to engage, and actually did engage. This fight united the poor toiling peasants, who do not live by exploiting the labour of others. But it also united the most prosperous and wealthy section of the peasantry, which cannot get along without hired labour.

As long as our revolution was occupied with this task, as long as we had to exert every effort in order that the power of the landlords might be swept away and entirely abolished by the independent movement of the peasants aided by the movement of the city workers, the revolution was a general revolution of the peasants and could therefore not go beyond bourgeois limits.

It had still not touched the more powerful and more modern enemy of all toilers—capital. It therefore threatened to end half way, as was the case with the majority of the revolutions in Western Europe, in which a temporary alliance of the urban workers and the whole of the peasantry succeeded in sweeping away the monarchy and the relics of mediævalism, in sweeping away the landed estates and the power of the landlords more or less thoroughly, but never succeeded in undermining the actual foundations of the power of capital.

And it was this much more important and much more difficult task that our revolution began to tackle in the summer and autumn of the present year. The tide of counter-revolutionary uprisings which rose in the summer of the present year—when the attack of the West European imperialists and of their hirelings, the Czecho-Slovakians, on Russia was joined by all the exploiting and coercive elements in Russian life—inspired a new spirit and new life in the peasants.

All these revolts in practice united the European imperialists, their hirelings, the Czecho-Slovakians, and all those who in Russia remained on the side of the landlords and capitalists in a desperate struggle against the Soviet power. And they were followed by the revolt of all the village kulaks.

The peasantry ceased to be united. The peasants, who had

fought like one man against the landlords, split into two camps the camp of the poor toiling peasants, who, side by side with the workers, continued steadfastly to strive for the realisation of socialism and proceeded from fighting the landlords to fighting capital, the power of money and the abuse of the great agrarian reform by the kulaks—and the camp of the more wealthy peasants. This struggle, which finally severed the property owning and exploiting classes from the revolution, placed our revolution on those socialist lines on which the working class so firmly and determinedly desired to place it in October, but along which it can never successfully direct the revolution if it does not meet with enlightened, determined and solid support in the rural districts.

It is this that constitutes the significance of the revolution which took place in the summer and autumn of the present year even in the most remote and out of the way villages of Russia, a revolution which was not as noisy, not as striking and obvious as the revolution of October of last year, but the significance of which is incomparably deeper and greater.

The formation of the Committees of Poor Peasants¹ in the rural districts marked a turning point and showed that the working class of the cities, which in November (October) had united with the whole of the peasantry to smash the principal enemy of free, toiling and socialist Russia, the landlords, had advanced from this task to a much more difficult and historically superior and truly socialist task—to carry the conscious socialist struggle into the rural districts and to arouse the minds of the peasants also. The great agrarian revolution, the proclamation in November (October) of the abolition of private property in land, the proclamation of the socialisation of the land, would inevitably have remained a revolution only on paper had not the urban workers roused to life the rural proletariat, the poor peasants, the toiling peasants, who constitute the vast majority, who, like the middle peasants, do not exploit the labour of others and are not interested in exploitation, and who therefore are capable of progressing, and have already progressed, beyond the joint struggle against the landlords.

¹ See note to p. 138 *—Ed

to the general proletarian struggle against capital, against the power of the exploiters—who rely on the power of money and movable property—progressed from sweeping Russia clear of the landlords to the task of establishing a socialist system

This step, comrades, was an extremely difficult one. Regarding this step, those who doubted the socialist character of our revolution prophesied that we would inevitably fail. Yet it is on this step that the whole cause of socialist construction in the agricultural districts now depends. The formation of the Committees of Poor Peasants, the wide network of these committees which has spread all over Russia, their transformation, which is now about to take place, and which in part has already begun, into fully competent village Soviets of Deputies, the duty of which will be to lay in the rural districts the foundation of socialist construction—the power of the toilers—therein lies the genuine pledge that we have not confined ourselves to the tasks to which ordinary bourgeois democratic revolutions in West European countries confined themselves. Having destroyed the monarchy and the mediæval power of the landlords, we are now passing to the work of genuine socialist construction. In the rural districts this is a very difficult but at the same time very important work. It is a thankful work. In the fact that we have aroused the consciousness of the toiling section of the peasants, in the fact that they have been finally severed from the interests of the capitalist class by a wave of capitalist revolts, in the fact that the toiling peasants in the Committees of Poor Peasants and the Soviets, which are now being reformed, are becoming merged more and more closely with the urban workers—in this we see the sole, yet true and undoubtedly abiding pledge that the cause of socialist development in Russia has now been placed on a firmer foundation. It has now acquired a basis among the vast masses of the rural population.

It cannot be denied that in a peasant country like Russia socialist construction is a very difficult thing. It cannot be denied that it was comparatively easy to sweep away an enemy like tsarism, like the landlords, like the landed estates. That task could be accomplished in the centre in a few days, it could be accomplished all over the country in a few weeks. But, by its very

nature, the task we are now tackling can be accomplished only by extremely persistent and protracted effort. Here we shall have to fight, step by step and inch by inch. We shall have to fight for the achievement of a new, socialist Russia, we shall have to fight for the social cultivation of the land.

And it goes without saying that a revolution of this kind, the transition from small, individual peasant farms to the social cultivation of the land, will require considerable time and can in no case be accomplished instantly.

We know very well that in countries where small peasant economy prevails the transition to socialism cannot be effected except by a series of gradual preliminary stages. This having been realised, the first aim set by the October Revolution was merely to dislodge and destroy the power of the landlords. The February fundamental law on the socialisation of the land,* which, as you know, was passed by the unanimous vote both of the Communists and of the members of the Soviet government who did not share the point of view of the Communists, was at the same time an expression of the will and mind of the vast majority of the peasants and a proof of the fact that the working class, the workers' Communist Party realising what their task is are persistently and patiently advancing towards the new socialist construction—advancing by a series of gradual measures, by arousing the consciousness of the toiling section of the peasantry and by advancing only in the measure that the consciousness of the peasants is aroused, and only in the measure that the peasantry is independently organised.

We fully realise that such vast upheavals in the lives of tens of millions of people as the transition from small individual peasant production to the social cultivation of the land, affecting as they do the most profound roots of life and habits, can be accomplished only by prolonged effort, and can in general be accomplished only when necessity compels people to reshape their whole lives.

And now, after a long and desperate war all over the world, we clearly discern the beginnings of a socialist revolution all over the world. This necessity has been created even for the most

backward of countries and—irrespective of any theoretical views or socialist doctrines—it is impressing on everybody that it is impossible to live in the old way

When the country has suffered such tremendous ruin and collapse, when we see this collapse spreading all over the world, the achievements of culture, science and technology gained by mankind in the course of many centuries being swept away in these four years of criminal, destructive and predatory war, and the whole of Europe, and not merely Russia alone returning to a state of barbarism—in the face of these facts, the broad masses, and particularly the peasantry, who perhaps have suffered most from this war, *are coming clearly to realise that tremendous efforts are required* that all energies must be strained in order to escape the legacy of this accursed war which has bequeathed us nothing but ruin and want. It is impossible to live in the old way, in the way we lived before the war. And the waste of human toil and effort associated with individual, small scale peasant production can no longer be tolerated. The productivity of labour would be doubled or trebled, the economy of human labour in agriculture and human production would be doubled and trebled, if a transition were made from this disunited, small scale production to social production

The impoverishment bequeathed us by the war simply does not allow us to restore the old small scale peasant form of production. Not only have the mass of the peasants been aroused by the war, not only has the war shown them what marvels of technology now exist and that these marvels have been adapted for the extermination of human beings, but it has provoked the thought that these marvels of technology must be used primarily to reshape the form of production which is the most common in the country, in which the greatest number of people are engaged, but which at the same time is most backward—agriculture. Not only has this *idea been provoked, but people have been made to realise* by the monstrous horrors of modern warfare the forces that have been created by modern science; they have been made to realise that these forces are being wasted in a frightful and senseless war, and that these very forces of science are the only means of salvation

from these horrors. It is our obligation and duty to use them to place this backward form of production—agriculture—on new lines, to reshape it and to transform agriculture from a form of production conducted in the old, unenlightened way into a form of production based on science and the achievements of technology. The war has induced the realisation of this much more than any of us can imagine. But not only has the war induced this realisation but it has also made it impossible to restore production in the old way.

Those who cherish the hope that after this war the situation as it existed before the war can be restored, that the old system and methods of production can be resumed, are mistaken—and are coming to realise their mistake more and more every day. The war has resulted in such frightful impoverishment that individual small farms now possess neither draught cattle nor implements. We can no longer tolerate such a dissipation of the labour of the people. The toiling and poor peasants, who have borne the greatest sacrifices for the revolution and have suffered most from the war, did not take the land from the landlords in order that it should fall into the hands of new kulaks. The very facts of life are now compelling these toiling peasants to face the question of turning to the social cultivation of the land as the only means of restoring the culture that has now been ruined and destroyed by the war, and as the only means of escaping from the state of ignorance, down-troddenness and oppression to which the whole mass of the agricultural population was condemned by capitalism—the ignorance and oppression which permitted the capitalists to inflict the war on mankind for four years and from which the toilers of all countries are resolving with revolutionary energy and fervour to rid themselves at all costs.

These, comrades, are the conditions that had to be created on a world scale in order that this very difficult and at the same time very important socialist reform, that this very important and fundamental socialist measure should be undertaken, as it is being undertaken in Russia. The formation of the Committees of Poor Peasants and this Joint Congress of Land Departments, Committees of Poor Peasants and agricultural communes, taken

in conjunction with the struggle which took place in the agricultural districts in the summer and autumn of the present year, go to show that the consciousness of very wide sections of the toiling peasantry has been aroused, and that the peasantry itself, the majority of the toiling peasants, are aspiring to the establishment of social cultivation of the land. Of course, I repeat we must tackle this great reform gradually. Nothing can be done here in a hurry. But I must remind you that the fundamental law on the socialisation of the land became a foregone conclusion the very next day after the revolution of November 7 (October 25). At the very first session of the first organ of Soviet power, the Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets, a law was enacted¹ declaring not only that private property in land was abolished for ever, not only that the landed estates were destroyed, but also, incidentally, that farm property, draught cattle and farm implements which passed into the possession of the people and of the toiling peasants should also become national property and cease to be the private property of individual farms. And on the fundamental question of our present aims, of the way we desire the land to be disposed of and what we call on the supporters of the Soviet government, the toiling peasants, to do in this respect, Article 11 of the law on the socialisation of the land which was adopted in February 1918² states that the aim is to develop collective farming in agriculture, as being the most advantageous from the point of view of economy of labour and products, at the expense of individual farming and with the aim of passing to a socialist system of production.

Comrades, when we passed this law complete unanimity and agreement did not exist between the Communists and the other parties. On the contrary, we passed this law when the Soviet power and the Soviet government consisted of a union of Communists and the Party of Left Socialist Revolutionaries, who did not share the Communist views. Nevertheless, we arrived at a unanimous decision, to which we adhere to this day, remembering, as I repeat, that the transition from individual farming to the social cultivation of the land cannot be effected all at once, and that the struggle

¹ See note to p. 5 *—Ed

² See note to p. 158 *—Ld

which developed in the cities was simpler. In the cities thousands of workers were confronted by one capitalist, and it did not require much effort to remove him. The struggle which developed in the rural districts, however, was much more complex. At first there was the assault of the peasants on the landlords, at first there was the complete abolition of the power of the landlords in such a way that it could never be restored again. This was followed by a struggle among the peasants themselves, among whom new capitalists arose in the shape of the kulaks, in the shape of the exploiters and profiteers, who used their surplus grain to enrich themselves at the expense of the starving non agricultural parts of Russia. Here a new struggle had to be fought, and you know that in the summer of this year this struggle led to the outbreak of a number of revolts. We do not say of the kulak as we do of the landlord and capitalist that he must be deprived of all his property. What we say is that we must break the kulak's resistance to indispensable measures, such as the grain monopoly, which he is violating in order to enrich himself by selling grain surpluses at profiteering prices, while the workers and peasants in the non agricultural areas are suffering the torments of starvation. And our policy here was to wage a struggle as merciless as that waged against the landlords and the capitalists. But there also remained the question of the attitude of the poor section of the toiling peasantry to the middle peasantry. Our policy in relation to the middle peasant was to form an alliance with him. He is no enemy of Soviet institutions, he is no enemy of the proletariat and socialism. He will, of course, vacillate and will consent to adopt socialism only when he sees by definite and convincing example that it is necessary. The middle peasant, of course, can not be convinced by theoretical arguments or by agitational speeches, and we do not count on doing so. But he can be convinced by the example and the solid front of the toiling section of the peasantry. He can be convinced by an alliance of the toiling peasantry with the proletariat. And here we count on a prolonged and gradual process of conviction and on a number of transitional measures which will embody the agreement of the proletarian socialist section of the population, the agreement of the Communists

—who are conducting a resolute fight against capital in all its forms—with the middle peasantry

And it is because we realise this state of affairs and because we realise that the task confronting us in the agricultural districts is incomparably more difficult that we are tackling the question in the way it was tackled in the law on the socialisation of the land. You know that this law proclaimed the abolition of private property in land and introduced the equal division of land. You know that the realisation of this law was begun in this spirit, and that it was put into effect in the majority of agricultural districts with the unanimous consent both of Communists and of people who at that time did not yet share Communist views. The law contains the thesis I have just read to you, which declares that our common task and our common aim is the transition to socialist production, to collective land tenure and the social cultivation of the land. As the period of construction progresses, both the peasants who have already settled on the land and the prisoners of war who are now returning in millions, worn and exhausted from captivity are coming to realise more and more clearly the vast scope of the work that must be performed in order to restore agriculture and emancipate the peasant for ever from his neglected, downtrodden and ignorant state. It is becoming more and more clear to them that the only permanent way of escape, one that will bring the masses of the peasants nearer to a cultured life and place them in a position of equality with other citizens, is the social cultivation of the land. And the Soviet government is now systematically striving by gradual measures to bring about the social cultivation of the land. It is in order to achieve the social cultivation of the land that the communes and the Soviet farms are being formed. The importance of such a form of farming is pointed out in the law on the socialisation of the land. In the section of the law which sets forth who is entitled to the use of the land you will find that among the persons and institutions entitled to use the land the first place is given to the state, the second to public organisations, the third to agricultural communes and the fourth to agricultural co-operative societies. I again draw your attention to the fact that these fundamental theses of the law on the socialisa-

tion of the land were laid down when the Communist Party was carrying out not only its own will, when it made deliberate concessions to those who in one way or another expressed the mind and will of the middle peasantry. We made such concessions, and are still making them. We concluded and are concluding an agreement of this kind because the transition to the collective form of agriculture, to the social cultivation of the land, to Soviet farms, to communes, cannot be accomplished all at once, it demands the exercise of stubborn and persistent influence by the Soviet government. The Soviet government has assigned one billion rubles for the improvement of agriculture on condition that social cultivation of the land be adopted. This law shows that we desire to influence the mass of middle peasants rather by the force of example, by inviting them to improve their methods of husbandry, and that we count only on the gradual influence of such measures to bring about this profound and important revolution in agricultural production in Russia.

The alliance of the Committees of Poor Peasants, agricultural communes and Land Departments we have at the present congress shows us and fully assures us, that the matter has now been put on right lines, on truly socialist lines, by this transition to the social cultivation of the land. By steady and systematic work along these lines an increase in the productivity of labour must be secured. For this purpose we must adopt the best agricultural methods and employ the agronomical forces of Russia so that we may be able to work the best organised farms which hitherto have served as a source of enrichment for individuals, as the source of a new growth of capitalism, as the source of a new bondage and a new enslavement of wage labourers, but which now, under the law on the socialisation of the land and the complete abolition of private property in land, must serve as a source of agricultural knowledge and culture and of increased productivity for millions of toilers. This alliance of the urban workers with the toiling peasantry, the formation of the Committees of Poor Peasants and the new elections to them as Soviet institutions are a pledge that agricultural Russia has now entered on a path which is being adopted later than it was by us, but more surely than it was by us,

by one West European state after another. It was much harder for them to start the revolution, because their enemy was not a rotten autocracy, but a highly cultured and united capitalist class. But you know that this revolution has begun. You know that the revolution has not been confined to Russia, and that our chief hope, our chief support, is the proletariat of the more advanced countries of Western Europe, and that this chief support of the world revolution has been set in motion. And we are firmly convinced, and the course of the German revolution has shown it, that in those countries the transition to socialist farming, the application of higher forms of agricultural science and the union of the toiling agricultural population will proceed much more rapidly and easily than was the case in our country.

In alliance with the workers of the cities and with the socialist proletariat of the whole world, the toiling peasants of Russia can now be certain that they will overcome all their misfortunes, beat off the attacks of the imperialists and accomplish that without which the emancipation of the toilers is impossible, *viz.*, the social cultivation of the land, the gradual but steady transition from small individual farms to the social cultivation of the land.

WORK IN THE RURAL DISTRICTS *

Report Delivered at the Eighth Congress of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks), March 23, 1919

COMRADES, I must apologise for having been unable to attend all the meetings of the committee elected by the congress to consider the question of work in the rural districts. My report will therefore be supplemented by the speeches of comrades who took part in the work of the committee from the very beginning. The committee finally drew up theses which were submitted to a commission and which will be reported on to you. I should like to dwell on the general significance of the question as it confronted us as the result of the work of the committee and as, in my opinion, it confronts the whole Party.

Comrades, it is quite natural that in the course of the development of the proletarian revolution we have to give prominence first to one and then to another of the more complex and important problems of social life. It is perfectly natural that in a revolution which affects, and is bound to affect the profoundest springs of life and the broadest masses of the population, not a single party, not a single government, no matter how close it may be to the masses can embrace all phases of life *at once*. And if we are now obliged to deal with the question of work in the rural districts and in connection with this question to give prime place to the position of the middle peasantry, there is nothing strange or abnormal in this from the standpoint of the development of the proletarian revolution in general. It is obvious that the proletarian revolution had to begin with the fundamental relations between two hostile classes, the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. The principal aim was to transfer the power to the working class, to set up its dictatorship, to overthrow the bourgeoisie and to deprive it of the

economic sources of its power, which are undoubtedly a hindrance to socialist construction in general. Acquainted as we were with Marxism we never for a moment doubted the truth that, owing to the very economic structure of capitalist society, the deciding factor in that society can be either the proletariat or the bourgeoisie. We now see many former Marxists—among the Mensheviks, for example—who assert that in a period of decisive struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie *democracy in general* can prevail. The Mensheviks, who have completely identified themselves with the Socialist Revolutionaries, talk in this way. As though the bourgeoisie itself does not create or abolish democracy as it finds most convenient for itself! And if that is so, there can be no question of democracy in general at a time of acute struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. It is astonishing how rapidly these Marxists, or pseudo Marxists—our Mensheviks, for example—expose themselves, and how rapidly their true nature as petty bourgeois democrats comes to the surface.

Marx all his life vigorously fought the illusions of petty bourgeois democracy and bourgeois democracy. Marx particularly scoffed at the empty words freedom and equality when they serve as screens for the freedom of the workers to die of starvation, or the equality of one who sells his labour power with the bourgeois who allegedly freely purchases the labour of the former in the open market as from an equal, and so forth. Marx explains this in all his economic works. It may be said that the whole of Marx's *Capital* is devoted to explaining the truth that *the basic forces of capitalist society are, and can only be, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat*—the bourgeoisie, as the builder of capitalist society, as its guide, as its motive force, and the proletariat, as its grave-digger and as the only force capable of replacing it. One can hardly find a single chapter in a single one of Marx's works that is not devoted to this. One might say that all over the world the Socialists of the Second International have vowed and sworn to the workers time out of number that they understand this truth. But when matters reached the stage of the last and decisive struggle for power between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie we find that our Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries, like the leaders of

the old Socialist Parties all over the world, forgot this truth and began to repeat in a purely automatic way the philistine talk about democracy in general

Attempts are sometimes made to lend those words what is considered to be greater force by speaking of "the dictatorship of democracy" That is sheer nonsense We know from history that the dictatorship of the democratic bourgeoisie meant nothing but the suppression of the insurrectionary workers That has been the case ever since 1848—at any rate, not later and isolated examples may be found even earlier History shows that it is precisely in a bourgeois democracy that a most acute struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie widely and freely proceeds We have had occasion to convince ourselves of the soundness of this truth in practice And the measures taken by the Soviet government since November (October) 1917 were distinguished by their firmness on all fundamental questions because we have never departed from this truth and have never forgotten it The struggle for supremacy waged against the bourgeoisie can be determined only by the dictatorship of one class—the proletariat Only the dictatorship of the proletariat can defeat the bourgeoisie Only the proletariat can overthrow the bourgeoisie And only the proletariat can secure the following of the masses in the struggle against the bourgeoisie

However, it by no means follows from this—it would be a profound mistake to think it does—that in the future work of building communism, now that the bourgeoisie has been overthrown and political power is already in the hands of the proletariat we can continue to carry on without the assistance of the middle and intermediary elements

It is only natural that at the beginning of the revolution—the proletarian revolution—the whole attention of its active participants should be concentrated on the main and fundamental thing, the supremacy of the proletariat and the achievement of that supremacy by a victory over the bourgeoisie, the achievement of a situation which would make it impossible for the bourgeoisie to return to power We are well aware that the bourgeoisie still enjoys the advantages derived from the wealth it possesses in other countries or even the monetary wealth it sometimes possesses in

our own country. We are well aware that there are social elements who are more experienced than proletarians and who aid the bourgeoisie. We are well aware that the bourgeoisie has not abandoned the idea of returning to power and has not ceased attempting to restore its supremacy.

But that is by no means all. The bourgeoisie, which adheres faithfully to the principle "my country is wherever it is good for me" and which, as far as money is concerned, has always been international—the bourgeoisie internationally is stronger than we are. Its supremacy is being rapidly undermined, it is being confronted with such facts as the Hungarian revolution¹—about which we had the happiness to inform you yesterday and of which we are today receiving confirmation—and it is beginning to understand that its supremacy is shaky. It no longer enjoys freedom of action. But now, if one reckons the material forces available all over the world, we are obliged to admit that materially the bourgeoisie is at present still stronger than we are.

That is why nine tenths of our attention and our practical activities were devoted, and had to be devoted, to this fundamental question—the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, the establishment of the power of the proletariat and the removal of every possibility of the return to power of the bourgeoisie. That is absolutely natural, legitimate and unavoidable, and much in this respect has been successfully accomplished.

Now, however, we must devote our attention to other strata of the population. We must devote our attention—and this was our conclusion in the agrarian committee, and on this we are convinced, all Party workers will agree, because we merely summarised the results of their observations—we must now devote our attention to *the question of the middle peasantry* in its full magnitude.

Of course, people will be found who instead of reflecting on the course of our revolution, instead of pondering over the tasks now confronting us, will make every measure of the Soviet government a butt of derision and criticism of the type indulged in by those gentlemen, the Mensheviks and the Right Socialist Revolu-

¹ See note to p. 47 *—Ed

tionaries These people have still not understood that they must make a choice between us and the bourgeois dictatorship We have displayed the utmost patience, even indulgence, towards these people We shall allow them to enjoy our indulgence once more But we shall in the very near future set a limit to our patience and indulgence, and if they do not make their choice, we shall tell them with seriousness to go to Kolchak [Applause] We do not expect particularly brilliant intellectual ability from such people [Laughter] But it might have been expected that after experiencing the bestialities of Kolchak they would have understood that we are entitled to demand that they should choose between us and Kolchak If during the first few months that followed the October Revolution there were many naive people who were stupid enough to believe that the dictatorship of the proletariat was a transitory and fortuitous thing, today even the Mensheviks and the Socialist Revolutionaries ought to understand that it is a normal phenomenon in the struggle that is being waged under the onslaught of the international bourgeoisie

Only two forces, in fact, exist the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and the dictatorship of the proletariat Whoever has not learnt this from Marx, whoever has not learnt this from the works of all the great Socialists, has never been a Socialist has never understood socialism, and has only called himself a Socialist We are allowing these people a short space for reflection and demand that they make their decision I have mentioned them because they are now saying, or will say "The Bolsheviks have raised the question of the middle peasants, they want to make advances to them" I am very well aware that considerable space is given in the Menshevik press to arguments of this kind, and even far worse We ignore such arguments, we never attach importance to the jabber of our opponents People who are still capable of running to and fro between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat may say what they please Their road is not ours

Our road is primarily determined by considerations of class forces A struggle is developing in capitalist society between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat As long as that struggle has not ended we shall give our keenest attention to ending it It has not

yet ended. In that struggle much has already been accomplished. The hands of the international bourgeoisie are no longer free. The best proof of this is that the Hungarian proletarian revolution has taken place. It is therefore clear that our constructive work in the rural districts has now gone beyond the limits to which it was confined when everything was subordinated to the fundamental demand of the struggle for power.

This constructive work passed through two main phases. In November (October) 1917 we seized power *together with the peasantry as a whole*. This was a bourgeois revolution,¹ inasmuch as the class war in the rural districts had not yet developed. As I have said, the real proletarian revolution in the rural districts began only in the summer of 1918. Had we not succeeded in stirring up this revolution our work would have been incomplete. The first stage was the seizure of power in the cities and the establishment of the Soviet form of government. The second stage was one which is fundamental for all Socialists and without which Socialists are not Socialists—namely, to pick out the proletarian and the semi-proletarian elements in the rural districts and to fuse them with the urban proletariat in order to wage the struggle against the bourgeoisie in the countryside. This stage is also in the main completed. The organisations we originally created for this purpose, the Committees of Poor Peasants² had become so consolidated that we found it possible to replace them by properly elected Soviets,³ i.e., to reorganise the village Soviets so as to make them the organs of class supremacy, the organs of proletarian power in the rural districts. Such measures as the law on socialist agrarian measures and measures for the transition to socialist agriculture,* which was passed not very long ago by the Central Executive Committee and with which everybody, of course, is familiar, sum up our experiences from the standpoint of our proletarian revolution.

The main thing, the prime and basic task of the proletarian revolution, we have already accomplished. And because we have accomplished it, a more complicated problem has arisen—our pol-

¹ See note to p. 37 *—/ d

² See note to p. 138 *—/ d

³ See note to p. 142 *—/ d

icy towards the middle peasantry And whoever thinks that the fact that this problem is being brought to the fore is in any way symptomatic of a weakening of the character of our government, of a weakening of the dictatorship of the proletariat, that it is symptomatic of a change, however partial, however minute, in our basic policy, completely fails to understand the aims of the proletariat and the aims of the communist revolution. I am convinced that there are no such people in our Party. I only desire to warn the comrades against people not belonging to the workers' party who will talk in this way, not because it follows from any system of ideas, but merely to spoil things for us and to help the White Guards—or, to put it more simply, to incite against us the middle peasant, who is always vacillating, who cannot help vacillating, and who will continue to vacillate for a fairly long time to come. In order to incite the middle peasant against us they will say "See, they are making advances to you. That means they have taken your revolts to heart, they are beginning to wobble," and so on and so forth. All our comrades must be armed against agitation of this kind. And I am certain that they will be armed—provided, that is, we succeed in having this question treated from the standpoint of the class struggle.

It is perfectly obvious that this fundamental problem—*how precisely to define the policy of the proletariat towards the middle peasantry*—is a much more complex but no less urgent and essential problem. Comrades, from the theoretical point of view which has been mastered by the vast majority of the workers, this question presents no difficulty to Marxists. I will remind you, for instance, that in his book *The Agrarian Question*, written at a time when he was still correctly expounding the doctrine of Marx and was regarded as an undisputed authority in this field, Kautsky states in connection with the transition from capitalism to socialism that the task of a Socialist party is to neutralise the peasantry, i.e., to see to it that in the struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie the peasant should remain neutral and should not be able to give active assistance to the bourgeoisie against us.

Throughout the long period of the domination of the bourgeoisie, the peasants supported the power of the latter, they sided

with the bourgeoisie. This will be understood if one remembers the economic strength of the bourgeoisie and the political methods by which it rules. We cannot count on the middle peasant coming over to our side immediately. But if we pursue a correct policy, after a time these vacillations will cease and the peasant will be able to come over to our side.

It was Engels—who together with Marx laid the foundations of scientific Marxism, that is, the doctrine by which our Party has always guided itself, and particularly in time of revolution—who established the division of the peasantry into small peasants, middle peasants and big peasants, and this division holds good for the vast majority of European countries even at the present day. Engels said: "Perhaps it will not everywhere be necessary to suppress even the big peasantry by force."¹ And that we might at any time exercise force in relation to the middle peasants (the small peasant is our friend), that thought never occurred to any sensible Socialist. That is what Engels said in 1894, a year before his death, when the agrarian question assumed prominence. This point of view expresses a truth which is sometimes forgotten, but with which we are all in theory agreed. In relation to the land lords and the capitalists our aim is complete expropriation. *But we shall not tolerate any violence towards the middle peasantry.* Even in regard to the rich peasants we are not as decisive as we are in regard to the bourgeoisie: we do not demand the absolute expropriation of the rich peasants and the kulaks. This distinction is made in our programme. We say that the resistance and the counter-revolutionary efforts of the rich peasant must be suppressed. That is not complete expropriation.

The basic distinction that determines our policy towards the bourgeoisie and the middle peasant—complete expropriation of the bourgeoisie and an alliance with the middle peasant who does not exploit others—this basic line is admitted by everybody in theory. But this line is not consistently observed in practice, they have not yet learnt to observe it in the localities. When, after having overthrown the bourgeoisie and consolidated its power, the

¹ See note to p. 39.—Ed

proletariat started from various angles to create a new society, the question of the middle peasant came to the fore. Not a single Socialist in the world denied that the building of communism would take different courses in countries where large scale agriculture prevails and in countries where small scale agriculture prevails. That is an elementary truth. And from this truth it follows that as we approach the problem of communist construction our principal attention must to a certain extent be concentrated precisely on the middle peasant.

Much will depend on how we define our policy towards the middle peasant. Theoretically, that question has been solved, but we know from our own experience that there is a difference between solving a problem theoretically and putting that solution into practical effect. We are now directly confronted with that difference, which was so characteristic of the Great French Revolution, when the French Convention launched into sweeping measures but did not possess the necessary base of support in order to put them into effect, and did not even know on what class to rely in order to put any particular measure into effect.*

Our position is an infinitely more fortunate one. Thanks to a whole century of development, we know on which class to rely. But we also know that the practical experience of that class is extremely inadequate. The fundamental aim was obvious to the working class and the workers' party—to overthrow the power of the bourgeoisie and to transfer power to the workers. But *how* was that to be done? You all remember with what difficulty and at the cost of what mistakes we proceeded from workers' control¹ to workers' management of industry. And yet that was work within our class, within the proletarian midst, with which we had always had to deal. But now we are called upon to define our attitude towards a new class, a class the urban worker does not know. We have to determine our attitude towards a class which has no definite and stable position. The mass of the proletariat is in favour of socialism, the mass of the bourgeoisie is opposed to socialism. It is easy to determine the relations between these two

¹ See note to p. 34.—*Ed.*

classes But when we pass to a stratum like the middle peasantry we find that *it is a class that vacillates* The middle peasant is partly a property owner and partly a toiler He does not exploit other toilers For decades the middle peasant defended his position with the greatest difficulty, he suffered the exploitation of the landlords and the capitalists, he bore everything Yet he is a property owner Our attitude towards this vacillating class therefore presents enormous difficulties In the light of more than a year's experience, in the light of more than six months' proletarian work in the rural districts, and in the light of the fact that class differentiation in the rural districts has already taken place, we must most of all refrain here from being too hasty, from being clumsily theoretical, from claiming to regard what is in process of being accomplished, but has not yet been accomplished, as already accomplished In the resolution which is being proposed to us by the commission elected by the committee, and which will be read to you by a subsequent speaker, you will find sufficient warning against this

From the economic point of view it is obvious that we must help the middle peasant Theoretically, there can be no doubt of this But because of our habits, our level of culture, the inadequacy of the cultural and technical forces we are in a position to place at the disposal of the rural districts, and because of the impotence many of us experience in the rural districts, comrades often resort to coercion and thus spoil everything Only yesterday a comrade gave me a pamphlet entitled *Instructions and Regulations on Party Work in the Nizhni Novgorod Gubernia*, issued by the Nizhni Novgorod Committee of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) and in this pamphlet, for example, I find on p 41

"The whole burden of the extraordinary tax decree must be placed on the shoulders of the village kulaks and profiteers and *the middle element of the peasantry generally*"

Well, well! These people have indeed "understood" This is either a printer's error—and it is intolerable that such printer's errors should be committed—or a piece of rushed hasty work which shows how dangerous all haste is in this matter Or—and

this is the worst presumption of all, one I would not like to make with regard to the Nizhni Novgorod comrades—they have simply failed to understand. It may very well be that it is an oversight.

We have in practice cases like the one related by a comrade in the commission. He was surrounded by peasants, and every one of them asked "Tell me, am I a middle peasant or not? I have two horses and one cow. I have two cows and one horse," etc. And this agitator, who was making a tour of the uyezds, was expected to possess an infallible thermometer with which to gauge every peasant and say whether he was a middle peasant or not. To do that one must know the whole history of the given peasant's farm, his relation to higher and lower groups—and we cannot know that with absolute accuracy.

Considerable practical ability and knowledge of local conditions is required here. And we have not got this yet. One need not be ashamed to confess it, it must be admitted frankly. We were never utopians and never imagined that we would build the communist society with the pure hands of pure Communists, born and educated in a pure communist society. That is a fairy tale. We have to build communism from the debris of capitalism, and only the class which has been tempered in the struggle against capitalism can do that. The proletariat, as you are very well aware, is not free from the shortcomings and weaknesses of capitalist society. It is fighting for socialism, but at the same time it is fighting its own shortcomings. The best and foremost section of the proletariat, which carried on a desperate struggle in the cities for decades, could in the course of that struggle acquire the culture of the city and of life in the capital, and to a certain extent it did acquire it. You know that even in the most advanced countries the rural districts were condemned to ignorance and darkness. Of course, we shall raise the level of culture in the rural districts, but that will be a work of many years. That is what our comrades everywhere are forgetting and what is being strikingly brought home to us by every word uttered by people who come from the rural districts, not by the local intellectuals, not by the officials—we have listened to them a lot—but by people who have in practice observed the work in the rural districts. It was

these opinions that we found particularly valuable in the agrarian committee. These opinions will be particularly valuable now—I am convinced of that—for the whole Party congress, for they are derived not from books, and not from decrees but from experience.

All this obliges us to work in a way that will introduce the greatest possible clarity into our relations with the middle peasant. This is very difficult, because *this clarity does not exist in reality*. Not only is this problem unsolved, it is *unsolvable* if you want to solve it *immediately and all at once*. There are people who say that there was no need to write so many decrees. They accuse the Soviet government of setting about writing decrees without knowing how they were to be put into effect. These people, as a matter of fact, do not realise that they are tending towards the White Guards. If we had expected that life in the rural districts could be changed by writing hundreds of decrees, we should have been absolute idiots. But if we had refrained from indicating in decrees the road that must be followed, we should have been traitors to socialism. These decrees, while they could not be carried into effect fully and immediately, played an important part as propaganda. While formerly we carried on our propaganda by means of general truths, *we are now carrying on our propaganda by our work*. That is also preaching, but it is preaching in action—only not action in the sense of isolated sallies, at which we scoffed so much in the era of the anarchists and the Socialism of the old type. Our decree is a call to action, but not the old call to action. “Workers, arise and overthrow the bourgeoisie!” No, it is a call to the masses, it calls them to practical action. *Decrees are instructions which call for practical mass action*. That is what is important. Let us assume that decrees do contain much that is useless, much that in practice cannot be put into effect, but they contain material for practical action, and the purpose of a decree is to teach practical measures to the hundreds, thousands and millions of people who hearken to the word of the Soviet government. This is a trial in practical action in the sphere of socialist construction in the rural districts. If we regard matters in this way we shall acquire a good deal from the sum total of our laws, decrees and

ordinances We shall not regard them as absolute injunctions which must be put into effect instantly and at all costs

We must avoid everything that in practice may tend to encourage individual abuses In places people have attached themselves to us like leeches who are careerists and adventurers, who call themselves Communists and are deceiving us, and who crept into our ranks because the Communists are now in power, and because the more honest official elements refused to come and work with us on account of their backward ideas, while careerists have no ideas, and no honesty These people, whose only aim is to make a career, are in various localities resorting to coercion and imagining they are doing a good thing But in fact the result of this at times is that the peasants exclaim "Long live the Soviet government, but *down with the commune!*" (i.e., communism) These are not imaginary cases, they are taken from real life, from the reports of comrades in the localities We must not forget what enormous damage is caused by excess, rashness and haste

We had to hurry and, by taking a desperate leap, to get out of the imperialist war, which had brought us to the verge of collapse We had to make desperate efforts to crush the bourgeoisie and the forces that were threatening to crush us All this was essential, without all this we could not have triumphed But if we were to act in the same way towards the middle peasant it would be such idiocy, such stupidity, it would be so ruinous to our cause that only provocateurs could deliberately act in such a way The aim here must be an entirely different one Here the question is not one of smashing the resistance of deliberate exploiters, of defeating them and overthrowing them—which was the aim we previously set ourselves No, now that this main purpose has been accomplished, more complicated problems arise You cannot create anything here by coercion *Coercion applied to the middle peasantry does great harm* This stratum is a numerous one, it consists of millions of individuals Even in Europe, where it nowhere achieves such strength, where technology and culture, city life and railroads are tremendously developed, and where it would be easiest of all to think of such a thing nobody, not even

the most revolutionary of Socialists, has ever proposed adopting measures of coercion towards the middle peasantry

When we took over power we relied on the support of the peasantry as a whole. At that time the aim of all the peasants was identical—to fight the landlords. But their prejudice against large scale farming has remained to this day. The peasant thinks “A large farm, that means I shall again be an agricultural labourer” That, of course, is a mistake. But the peasant’s idea of large scale farming is associated with a feeling of hatred and the memory of how the landlords used to oppress the people. That feeling still remains, it has not yet died out.

We must particularly stress the truth that here coercive methods will accomplish virtually nothing. The economic task is here an entirely different one. Here we have not that upper layer which can be cut off, leaving the foundations and the building intact. That upper layer which in the cities was represented by the capitalists does not exist here. *Here coercion would ruin the whole cause.* Prolonged educational work is what is required. We have to give the peasant, who not only in our country but all over the world is a practical man and a realist, concrete examples to prove that the commune is the best possible thing. Of course, nothing will come of it if hasty individuals go flitting to the villages from the cities, come there, make a speech, stir up a number of intellectual and at times unintellectual brawls, and then shake the dust from their feet and go their way. That sometimes happens. Instead of arousing respect, they arouse ridicule, and deservedly so.

On this question we must say that we encourage communes, but that they must be so organised *as to gain the confidence of the peasants.* And until then we are pupils of the peasants and not their teachers. Nothing is more foolish than when people who know nothing about agriculture and its specific features fling themselves on the village because they have heard of the advantages of socialised farming, are tired of city life and desire to work in agricultural districts—nothing is more foolish than when such people regard themselves as all round teachers of the peasants. *Nothing is more foolish than the idea of applying coercion in the middle peasant’s economic relations.*

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The aim here is not to expropriate the middle peasant but to bear in mind the specific conditions in which the peasant lives, to learn from the peasant methods of transition to a better system, *and not to dare to domineer!* That is the rule we have set ourselves [*General applause*] That is the rule we have endeavoured to set forth in our draft resolution, for in that respect, comrades, we have indeed sinned grievously; We ought not to be ashamed to confess it. We were inexperienced. Our very struggle against the exploiters was taken from experience. If we have sometimes been condemned on account of it, we are able to say "Messieurs the capitalists, you have only yourselves to blame. If you had not offered such savage, senseless, insolent and desperate resistance, if you had not joined in an alliance with the bourgeoisie of the world, the revolution would have assumed more peaceful forms." Now that we have repulsed the savage attack on all sides, we may adopt other methods, because we are acting not as a circle, but as a party which is leading the millions. The millions cannot immediately understand a change, of course, and so it frequently happens that blows aimed at the kulaks fall on the middle peasants. That is not surprising. It must only be understood that this is due to historical conditions which have now been outlived and that the new conditions and the new tasks in relation to this class demand a new psychology.

Our decrees on peasant farming are in the main correct. We have no grounds for renouncing a single one of them, or for regretting a single one of them. But while the decrees are right, *it is wrong to impose them on the peasantry by force.* That is not contained in a single decree. They are right inasmuch as they indicate the roads to follow, inasmuch as they are a call for practical measures. When we say, "Encourage association," we are giving instructions which must be tested many times before the final form in which to put them into effect is found. When it is stated that we must strive to gain their voluntary consent, it means that the peasants must be convinced, and convinced in practice. They will not allow themselves to be convinced by mere words, and they are perfectly right. It would be a bad thing if they allowed themselves to be convinced merely by decrees and agita-

tional leaflets. If it were possible to reshape economic life in this way, such reshaping would not be worth a brass farthing. It must first be demonstrated that such association is better, people must be united in such a way that they are actually united and are not at odds with each other—it must be proved that association is advantageous. That is the way the peasant puts the question and that is the way our decrees put it. If we have not been able to achieve that so far, there is nothing to be ashamed of and we must admit it frankly.

We have so far accomplished only what is fundamental for every socialist revolution—defeated the bourgeoisie. That in the main has been accomplished, although an extremely difficult half year is beginning in which the imperialists of the world will make a last attempt to crush us. We can now say without exaggeration that *they themselves understand that after this half year their cause will be absolutely hopeless*. Either they take advantage of our exhausted state and defeat us, an isolated country, or we prove to be the victors not merely in regard to our country alone. In this half year, in which a food crisis has been aggravated by a transport crisis, and in which the imperialist powers are endeavouring to attack us on several fronts, our situation is an extremely difficult one. But *this is the last difficult half-year*. We must continue to mobilise all our forces in the struggle against the external enemy, who is attacking us.

But when we speak of the aims of our work in the rural districts, in spite of all the difficulties, and in spite of the fact that our experience has been wholly concerned with the immediate task of crushing the exploiters, we must remember, and never forget, that the tasks in the rural districts, in relation to the middle peasant, are entirely different.

All the class conscious workers—from Petrograd, Ivanovo-Voznessensk, or Moscow—who have been to the rural districts related examples of how a number of misunderstandings which it appeared were irremovable, and a number of conflicts which appeared to be very serious, were removed and mitigated when capable working men came forward and spoke, not in the language of books, but in language understood by the muzhiks, when they

spoke not as commanders who take the liberty of commanding without knowing anything of rural life, but as comrades, explaining the situation and appealing to their sentiments as toilers against the exploiters. And by such comradesly elucidation they accomplished what could not be accomplished by hundreds of others who conducted themselves like commanders and superiors.

This spirit permeates the resolution we are now submitting to your attention.

I have endeavoured in my brief report to dwell on the underlying principles and the general political significance of this resolution. I have endeavoured to show—and I should like to think that I have shown—that from the point of view of the interests of the revolution as a whole we are making no change of front, we are not changing the line. The White Guards and their henchmen are asserting, or will assert, that we are. Let them. It does not affect us. We are developing our aims in a consistent manner. We must transfer our attention from the aim of crushing the bourgeoisie to the aim of adjusting the life of the middle peasant. We must live in peace with him. In a communist society the middle peasant will be on our side when we mitigate and ameliorate his economic conditions. If tomorrow we could supply one hundred thousand first class tractors, provide them with fuel, provide them with drivers—you know very well that this at present is a fantasy—the middle peasant would say “I am for the commune” (i.e., for communism). But in order to do that we must first defeat the international bourgeoisie, we must compel them to give us these tractors, or so develop our productive forces as to be able to provide them ourselves. That is the only way to regard the matter.

The peasant needs the industry of the towns, he cannot live without it, and it is in our hands. If we set about the task properly, the peasant will be grateful to us for bringing him these products, these implements and this culture from the towns. They will be brought to him not by exploiters, not by landlords, but by fellow toilers, whom he values very highly, but values practically, for the actual help they give, at the same time rejecting—and rightly rejecting—all domineering and “dictation” from above.

First help, and then endeavour to win confidence. If you set about this matter correctly, if every step taken by every one of our groups in the uyezds, the volosts, the food detachments, and in every other organisation is properly directed, if every step we take is carefully tested from this point of view, we shall gain the confidence of the peasants, and only then shall we be able to proceed farther. What we must now do is to help him and advise him. This will not be the orders of a commander, but the advice of a comrade. The peasant will then be entirely on our side.

This, comrades, is what is contained in our resolution and this must be the decision of the congress. If we adopt this, if it serves to determine the work of all our Party organisations, we shall cope with the second great task confronting us.

We have learnt how to overthrow the bourgeoisie, how to crush it and we are proud of the fact. But how to regulate our relations with the millions of middle peasants, how to win their confidence, that we have not yet learnt—and we must frankly admit it. But we have understood the task, we have begun to tackle it, and we say in all confidence, with full knowledge and determination, that we shall cope with this task—and then socialism will be absolutely invincible. [*Prolonged applause*]

POLICY TOWARDS THE MIDDLE PEASANTRY

*Resolution Adopted by the Eighth Congress of the Russian
Communist Party (Bolsheviks)*

March 23, 1919¹

ON the question of work in the rural districts the Eighth Congress, taking its stand on the Party programme adopted on March 22, 1919, and wholeheartedly endorsing the law on socialist agrarian measures and measures transitional to socialist agriculture² already adopted by the Soviet government, recognises that at the present moment particular significance attaches to the proper carrying out of the Party line in relation to the middle peasants by paying more careful attention to their needs, eliminating cases of arbitrary conduct on the part of the local government authorities and endeavouring to reach an agreement with them

1) To confuse the middle peasants with the kulaks, to extend to them in any degree whatsoever measures directed against the kulaks, is to commit a gross violation not only of all the decrees of the Soviet government and its policy, but also of all the fundamental principles of communism, which enjoin agreement between the proletariat and the middle peasantry during the period of the decisive struggle of the proletariat for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie as one of the conditions for a painless transition to the elimination of all forms of exploitation

2) In view of the fact that agricultural technique lags behind industrial technique even in the most advanced capitalist countries, not to mention Russia, the middle peasantry possesses comparatively tenacious economic roots and will continue to hold its ground for a fairly long time after the proletarian revolution has

¹ See note to p 166 *—Ed

² See note to p 171 *—Ed

begun Accordingly, the tactics of Soviet workers in the rural districts, as well as of Party workers, must be based on the expectation of a prolonged period of collaboration with the middle peasantry

3) The Party must at all costs see to it that all Soviet workers in the rural districts clearly and firmly realise the truth, fully established by scientific socialism, that the middle peasants are not exploiters, since they do not profit from the labour of others Such a class of small producers cannot lose by socialism, but on the contrary to a very large degree gains by the overthrow of the yoke of capital, which in every republic, even the most democratic, exploits it in a thousand ways

Thus, if the Soviet government conducts an absolutely correct policy in the rural districts, an alliance and agreement between the triumphant proletariat and the middle peasantry will be ensured

4) While encouraging co operative associations of every kind, including agricultural communes of middle peasants, the representatives of the Soviet government must not resort to the slightest compulsion in the creation of such associations Only such as associations are valuable as are started by the peasants themselves on their own free initiative and the advantages of which have been tested by them in practice Excessive haste in this respect is harmful, since it may only tend to aggravate the aversion of the middle peasants to innovations

Representatives of the Soviet government who permit themselves to resort even to indirect, not to mention direct, compulsion in order to get the peasants to join the communes must be called to strict account and removed from work in the rural districts

5) All arbitrary requisitions, i.e., such as are not sanctioned by the specific provisions of the laws of the central government, must be ruthlessly penalised The congress insists that the control of the People's Commissariat of Agriculture, the People's Commissariat of Home Affairs and the All Russian Central Executive Committee in this respect shall be increased

6) At the present moment the extreme state of economic disruption, which prevails in all countries of the world as the result

of the four years of imperialist war waged on behalf of the predatory interests of the capitalists, and which has assumed a particularly acute form in Russia, has rendered the position of the middle peasants extremely grave

Bearing this in mind, the law of the Soviet government on the extraordinary tax, in distinction to the laws of every bourgeois government in the world, insists that the burden of taxation be laid on the kulaks, on those numerically few representatives of the exploiting peasantry who piled up exceptional wealth during the war. The middle peasants, on the other hand, must be taxed very moderately and only in a measure that will be quite tolerable and not too burdensome for them.

The Party demands that in relation to the middle peasant the exaction of the extraordinary tax shall at any rate be ameliorated, even though this may involve a reduction of the total proceeds of the tax.

7) The socialist state must accord the widest possible assistance to the peasantry, chiefly in the form of supplying the middle peasants with the products of urban industry and particularly with improved agricultural implements, seed, and all kinds of material necessary to raise the level of agricultural production and required in the labour and life of the peasants.

If the present state of economic disruption does not allow these measures to be put into effect immediately and fully, it is the duty of the local Soviet authorities to seek every possible method of according real assistance to the poor and middle peasants so as to sustain them in these difficult times. The Party considers it necessary that a large state fund be assigned for this purpose.¹

8) In particular, we must see to it that the law of the Soviet government which demands that the Soviet farms, agricultural communes and similar associations should give immediate and extensive assistance to the surrounding middle peasants* shall be really carried into effect—and fully carried into effect. It is only on the basis of such practical assistance that an agreement with

¹ See note to p. 142 ***—Ed

the middle peasants can be reached. It is only thus that their confidence can and must be won.

The congress draws the attention of all Party workers to the necessity for the immediate and effective fulfilment of all the demands contained in the agrarian section of the Party programme, to wit:

a) Systematisation of peasant land tenure (abolition of the open field system, etc.), b) supplying the peasants with improved seed and fertilisers, c) improvement of the breed of the peasants' cattle, d) spreading of agronomic knowledge, e) agronomic aid to the peasants, f) repair of the peasants' agricultural implements at Soviet repair shops, g) organisation of stations for hiring implements, experimental stations, model fields, etc., h) reclamation of peasant lands.

9) The state must accord extensive assistance, both financial and organisational, to co-operative associations of the peasants formed for the purpose of raising the level of agricultural production, and particularly for the purpose of working up agricultural products, improving the land of the peasants, fostering handicraft industry, etc.

10) The congress draws attention to the fact that neither in the decisions of the Party nor in the decrees of the Soviet government has there ever been any departure from the policy of agreement with the middle peasantry. For instance, in connection with the important question of the structure of the Soviet government in the rural districts, when the Committees of Poor Peasants were formed a circular was issued signed by the Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars and the People's Commissar of Food pointing to the necessity of including representatives of the middle peasantry on the Committees of Poor Peasants.* When the Committees of Poor Peasants were abolished the All-Russian Congress of Soviets again pointed to the necessity of including representatives of the middle peasantry in the volost Soviets. The policy of the workers' and peasants' government and of the Communist Party must continue in the future to be conducted in this spirit of agreement between the proletariat and the poor peasantry, on the one hand, and the middle peasantry, on the other.

THE MIDDLE PEASANTS ¹

SPEECH FOR A GRAMOPHONE RECORD

THE most important question which now confronts the Party of Communists and which attracted the greatest attention at the last Party congress is the question of the middle peasants

Naturally, the first question usually asked is, what is a middle peasant?

Naturally, Party comrades have frequently related how in the villages they have been asked what a middle peasant is. And to this we reply that the middle peasant is a peasant who does not exploit the labour of others, who does not live on the labour of others, who does not in any shape or form take advantage of the fruits of the labour of others, but who himself works and lives by his own labour.

Such peasants were fewer under capitalism than now, because the majority of the peasants belonged to the ranks of the very needy, and only an insignificant minority, then, as now, belonged to the ranks of the kulaks, the exploiters, the rich peasants.

The middle peasants are growing in number now that private property in land has been abolished. And with the middle peasant the Soviet government has firmly resolved at all costs to establish relations of complete peace and harmony. It is understood that the middle peasant cannot immediately accept socialism, because he firmly clings to what he is accustomed to, regards all innovations warily, first tests that to which he is invited in action, in practice, and does not make up his mind to change his mode of life until he is convinced that the change is necessary.

And because of this, what we must know, what we must remember and practise is that when Communist workers appear in

¹ See note to p. 166*—Ed

rural districts it is their duty to seek comradesly relations with the middle peasant, it is their duty to establish comradesly relations with him, it is their duty to remember that a toiler who does not exploit the labour of others is a comrade of the worker and that with him we can and must achieve a voluntary alliance inspired by sincerity and confidence. Every measure proposed by the Communist government must be regarded merely as advice, as an indication to the middle peasant, as a recommendation that he should adopt a new order of things.

And it is only by the joint work of testing these measures in practice, of testing their mistakes, of eliminating possible errors and of achieving agreement with the middle peasant—only by such work can the alliance between the workers and the peasants be ensured. This alliance constitutes the main strength and bulwark of the Soviet government, this alliance is a pledge that the cause of socialist reform, of the victory over capital and the abolition of all forms of exploitation—that this cause will be successfully accomplished.

Delivered in 1919

SPEECH DELIVERED AT THE FIRST ALL-RUSSIAN CONFERENCE ON WORK IN THE RURAL DISTRICTS

*November 18, 1919 **

COMRADES, I have unfortunately been unable to take part in the work of the conference you have organised, the conference on work in the rural districts. I am therefore obliged to confine myself to general and fundamental observations, and I am convinced that you will succeed in gradually applying these general observations and the underlying rules of our policy to the various problems and practical questions that will confront you.

The question of work in the rural districts is now, after all, the basic question of the whole work of socialist construction, for as regards work among the proletariat and the question of uniting the proletariat, we may assert with confidence that during the two years of existence of the Soviet government not only has the policy of the Communists been fully defined, but it has undoubtedly achieved lasting results. We were at first obliged to combat a certain lack of understanding of common interests among the workers, certain manifestations of syndicalism, as expressed in the endeavour of the workers of certain factories or certain branches of industry to place their own interests, the interests of their factory or their industry, above the interests of society. We were obliged, and are still obliged, to combat a certain lack of discipline in the matter of the new organisation of labour. I think you will all recall the principal stages through which our policy passed when we promoted ever increasing numbers of workers to new posts and gave them the opportunity of acquainting themselves with the tasks confronting us and with the general mechanism of state administration. The organisation of the communist activities of the proletariat, as well as the whole policy of the Communists has

now assumed a final and stable form, and I am convinced that we are on the right road and that progress along this road is fully ensured

As to work in the rural districts, the difficulties here are undoubtedly great, and at the Eighth Congress of the Party this problem, since it is one of our most important problems, was examined in all its scope.¹ In the rural districts, as in the towns, only the members of the toiling and exploited masses, only those who under capitalism suffered the full weight of the oppression of the landlords and capitalists, can serve as our support. Of course, since the time when the conquest of power by the workers enabled the peasants to overthrow the power of the landlords at once and to destroy private property, they accomplished, by proceeding to divide up the land, the greatest possible degree of equality, and thus considerably intensified the exploitation of the soil, raising it to a higher level than the average. But, of course, we could not entirely succeed in this, for the reason that under a system of individual farming it would require vast material resources to supply every peasant with sufficient seed, cattle and implements. Furthermore, even if our industry achieved unusual success in developing the production of agricultural machines, even if we imagine all our wishes to have been fulfilled, even then it will be easily understood that it is impossible and in the highest degree irrational to supply every peasant with adequate means of production, because that would imply a frightful diffusion of resources. Only by collective, *artel*, co-operative labour will it be possible to emerge from the impasse into which the imperialist war has driven us.

It is particularly difficult for the peasant masses, who, because of their economic position, were most oppressed under capitalism, to believe in the possibility of abrupt changes and transitions. The experiments performed on the peasant by Kolchak, Yudenich and Denikin lead him to be particularly cautious in respect of his conquests. Every peasant knows that the durability of his conquests has not yet been finally established, that his enemy—the

¹ See note to p. 166 *—Ed

landlord—has not yet been destroyed, and that his enemy is biding his time and awaiting assistance from his friends, the international capitalist bandits. And although international capital is growing feebler every day, and our international position has recently extraordinarily improved, yet if all the circumstances of the case are soberly weighed it must be admitted that international capital is undoubtedly still stronger than we are. It now cannot wage direct war on us, for its wings have been clipped. Quite recently these gentlemen have begun to say in the European bourgeois press "It looks as if we may get stuck in Russia, perhaps it would be better to come to terms with her." That is always the case when you beat the enemy he wants to come to terms. We have repeatedly told these gentlemen the European imperialists that we were willing to make peace, but they dreamed of enslaving Russia. Now they have come to understand that their dreams are not destined to be realised.

The international millionaires and billionaires are at present still stronger than we are. And the peasants clearly see that the attempts at revolt made by Yudenich, Kolchak and Denikin are organised on the money of the imperialists of Europe and America. And the peasant masses fully understand what the least weakness bodes them. The clear recollection of the menace represented by the power of the landlords and the capitalists makes the peasant a most loyal supporter of the Soviet government. From month to month, the consciousness of the stability of the Soviet government is growing among the peasants who formerly toiled and were exploited and who suffered the full brunt of the oppression of the landlords and capitalists.

But, of course, the case is different with the kulaks, with those who themselves employed workers, loaned out money at interest, and grew rich on the labour of others. They are, as a whole, on the side of the capitalists, and are dissatisfied with the revolution. And we must clearly realise that we shall have to wage a long and stubborn fight against this group of peasants. But between those peasants who suffered the full weight of the oppression of the landlords and capitalists and those who themselves exploited others, stands the mass of middle peasants. Therein lies

our most difficult problem Socialists have always pointed out that the transition to socialism involves an intricate problem—the attitude the working class should adopt towards the middle peasantry Here we must expect particularly careful attention from our comrades, the Communists, an enlightened attitude, and the ability to tackle this complex and difficult problem without attempting to solve the question at one blow

Unquestionably, the middle peasants are accustomed to individual enterprise They are peasant owners And although they yet have no land, although private property in land has been abolished, the peasants remain property owners, chiefly because this group of peasants possess articles of food The middle peasant produces more food than he himself requires, and thus, possessing a surplus of grain, he becomes an exploiter of the hungry worker Therein lies the main problem and the main contradiction The peasant as a toiler, as a person who lives by his own labour, as a person who has borne the yoke of capitalism—such a peasant is on the side of the worker But the peasant as a property owner possessing a surplus of grain is accustomed to regard the latter as his own property, which he may freely sell But to sell surplus grain in a starving country is to turn oneself into a profiteer, an exploiter, because a hungry man will give everything he possesses for bread And here begins a great and difficult struggle, which demands of all of us, of all representatives of the Soviet government, and particularly of Communists working in the rural districts, the most careful attention and a most thoughtful attitude and approach to the problem

We have always said that it is not our desire to impose socialism on the middle peasantry by force, and that was fully endorsed by the Eighth Party Congress The selection of Comrade Kalinin as Chairman of the All Russian Central Executive Committee was based on the consideration that we must establish direct contact between the Soviet government and the peasantry And thanks to Comrade Kalinin, work in the rural districts has received a big impetus The peasant has undoubtedly obtained the opportunity of keeping in more direct contact with the Soviet government by applying to Comrade Kalinin, who in his person represents the

supreme power of the Soviet Republic And in this way we say to the middle peasant "There can be no question of the transition to socialism being in any way forcibly imposed" But he must be got to understand this, we must be able to tell him this in language best understood by the peasant The only thing that will be effective here is the force of example, the successful organisation of social production And in order to give an example of artel, or co operative, labour, we must ourselves first successfully organise production along these lines The movement for the organisation of agricultural communes and artels has been tremendous during the past two years But if we regard matters soberly we must admit that the mass of comrades who flung themselves into the organisation of communes came to agriculture with an inadequate knowledge of the conditions of peasant husbandry It therefore became necessary to rectify a vast number of mistakes, mistakes resulting from precipitate measures and a wrong approach Former exploiters, former landlords, very frequently wormed their way into Soviet farms Their power there has been overthrown, but they themselves have not been destroyed They have to be ejected, or placed under the control of the proletariat

This problem faces us in every sphere of life You have heard of the brilliant successes of the Red Army Tens of thousands of former officers and colonels are working in the Red Army If we had not engaged their services and compelled them to work for us we should have been unable to create an army And in spite of the treachery of certain military experts, we smashed Kolchak and Yudenich and are winning on every front That is because, thanks to the existence of Communist nuclei in the Red Army, the propaganda and agitational value of which is tremendous, the small number of officers are invested by such an atmosphere, are subject to such tremendous pressure from the Communists, that the majority of them are incapable of breaking through the network of Communist organisation and propaganda by which we have surrounded them

Communism cannot be built without a store of knowledge, technology and culture, and these are in the hands of the bourgeois experts The majority of them do not sympathise with the Soviet

government, but without them we cannot build communism. They must be surrounded by an atmosphere of comradeship and the spirit of Communist work, and we must strive to get them to march in line with the workers' and peasants' government.

The peasants often betray extreme mistrust and indignation, going at times to the length of completely rejecting the Soviet farms. The Soviet farms are no good, they say, they harbour the old exploiters. But we said "No, if you are unable yourselves to organise agriculture on new lines, you must employ the services of the old experts, for otherwise you will never escape from poverty." We will ruthlessly eliminate those among them who violate the decisions of the Soviet government, just as we did in the Red Army. The fight is continuing, and the fight is a merciless one. But we shall compel the majority of them to work in our way.

That is a difficult problem, a complicated problem, one that cannot be solved at one sweep. Here enlightened working class discipline is required and close contact with the peasants. They must be shown that we are not blind to the abuses in the Soviet farms, but we say that men of science and technology must be employed in the service of social agriculture, for there is no escape from poverty in small scale agriculture. And we shall act as we did in the Red Army: they may beat us a hundred times, but the hundred and first time we shall beat them all. But that requires that our work in the rural districts should be conducted as harmoniously and systematically, and in the same strict order as our work was conducted in the Red Army and as it is being conducted in other spheres of production. Slowly but surely, we shall bring the advantages of social production home to the peasants.

That is the kind of fight we must carry on in the Soviet farms. And it is here that the difficulty of the transition to socialism lies, and here that the real and final consolidation of the Soviet power can be achieved. When the majority of the middle peasants come to realise that by refraining from an alliance with the workers they are helping Kolchak and Yudenich, that all over the world the latter are obtaining support only from the capitalists, who hate Soviet Russia and who will continue their attempts to restore their power for many years to come, even the most backward among them

will come to realise that they can either march to complete emancipation in alliance with the revolutionary workers, or, if they permit even the slightest vacillation, the enemy, the old capitalist exploiter, will gain the upper hand. The defeat of Denikin will not mean the final destruction of the capitalists. We must understand that, all of us. We fully realise that they will make attempt after attempt to put Soviet Russia in a noose. There is therefore no choice for the peasant—he must help the workers, for the slightest vacillation will place the victory in the hands of the landlords and capitalists. It is our prime and basic duty to develop the realisation of this fact in the minds of the peasants. The peasant who lives by his own labour is a true ally of the Soviet government. The worker regards this peasant as an equal. The government of the workers will do all it can for him, and there is no sacrifice at which the government of the workers and peasants will stop in order to meet the needs of this peasant.

But the peasant who exploits, because of the fact that he possesses a surplus of grain, is our enemy. The duty of satisfying the fundamental needs of a starving country is a civic duty. But by no means all the peasants realise that free trading in grain is treason to the state. "I grew that grain, it is my product, and I am entitled to trade in it"—so, by habit and routine, the peasant argues. But we say that *it is high treason*. Free trading in grain means growing rich on that grain. That means a return to the old capitalism. That we shall not permit, here we shall fight to the bitter end.

In the transition period we resort to the state purchase and requisition of grain. We know that this is the only escape from poverty and hunger. The vast majority of workers are suffering want because grain is being wrongly distributed. And in order that it should be properly distributed it is essential that the state quotas of grain shall be fulfilled by the peasants promptly, scrupulously and unconditionally. Here the Soviet government can make no concessions. This is not a question of the workers' government fighting the peasants, it is a question of the very existence of socialism, of the very existence of the Soviet government. We are not in a position at present to provide the peasant with goods, because there is no fuel and the railroads are coming to a standstill. The peasant must first give the worker grain as a loan, and at a fixed

price, and not at a profiteering price in order that the worker may restore production. Any peasant would agree to that if it were a question of an individual worker dying of hunger close by. But when it is a question of millions of workers they do not under stand, and old habits of profiteering gain the upper hand.

A prolonged and obstinate fight against these habits carried on by means of agitation, propaganda and explanation, and by keeping a check on what has been done—that must be our policy towards the peasantry.

Our first duty is to support the toiling peasant in every way, to treat him as an equal, and to make no attempt to impose anything on him by force. And our second duty is to wage an unswerving struggle against profiteering, illicit trading and economic disruption.

When we began to create the Red Army it consisted of isolated and disunited groups of partisans. There were many unnecessary sacrifices, owing to the absence of discipline and organisation. But we have overcome these difficulties and, in place of the partisan detachments, have created a Red Army numbering millions. If we could achieve that in so short a space of time as two years, and in so difficult, intricate and dangerous a field as the military field, we can be certain that we shall be just as successful in all other spheres of economic life.

I am sure that this problem, one of the most difficult of problems—the problem of establishing proper relations between the workers and the peasants and of conducting a correct food policy—will be solved, and that our victory here will be no less than the victory we gained at the front.

SPEECH AT THE FIRST CONGRESS OF AGRICULTURAL COMMUNES AND AGRICULTURAL ARTELS *

December 4, 1919

COMRADES, I am very glad to greet, on behalf of the government, your first congress of agricultural communes and agricultural artels. Of course, all of you know from the activities of the Soviet government the tremendous significance we attach to the communes, artels and all organisations generally that aim at transforming and at gradually assisting the transformation of small scale, individual peasant production into social, co operative or artel production. You are aware that the Soviet government has long ago assigned a fund of one billion rubles to assist efforts of this kind.¹ The statutes on socialist agrarian measures² particularly stress the significance of communes, artels and all enterprises for the social cultivation of the land, and the Soviet government is exerting every effort in order that this law shall not remain a paper law, and that it shall really produce the benefits it is intended to produce. The importance of enterprises of this kind is tremendous, because if the old, poverty stricken peasant husbandry remained unchanged there could be no question of building up a stable socialist society. Only if we succeed in proving to the peasants in practice the advantages of social, collective, co operative or artel methods of cultivating the soil, only if we succeed in helping the peasant by means of co operative or artel farms, will the working class, which holds the power of the state, be really able to prove the correctness of its position to the peasant and truly and enduringly win over the millions of peasants. It is therefore impossible to exaggerate the importance of every measure intended to encourage co operative or artel forms of agriculture.

¹See note to p. 142 ***—Ed

See note to p. 171 *—Fd

We have millions of individual farms in our country scattered and dispersed throughout remote rural districts. It would be absolutely absurd to attempt to reshape these farms in any rapid way, by order or by action from outside. We fully realise that one can influence the millions of small peasant farms only gradually and cautiously and only by a successful practical example. For the peasants are far too practical and cling far too tenaciously to the old methods of agriculture to consent to any serious change merely on the basis of advice or the indications contained in books. That is impossible, ay, and it would be absurd. Only when it is proved in practice, by experience comprehensible to the peasants that the transition to the co-operative or *artel* form of agriculture is essential and possible, shall we be entitled to say that in this vast peasant country, Russia, an important step towards socialist agriculture has been taken. Consequently, the vast importance that attaches to communes, *artels* and co-operative farms lays on all of you tremendous state and socialist obligations and naturally compels the Soviet government and its representatives to treat this question with especial attention and caution.

In our law on socialist agrarian measures it is stated that we consider it the absolute duty of all co-operative or *artel* agricultural enterprises not to isolate and sever themselves from the surrounding peasant population, but to afford them definite assistance. This is stipulated in the law, it is repeated in the rules of the communes, and it is being constantly developed in the instructions of our Commissariat of Agriculture—and that is the most important thing. But the whole point is to find a really practical method of putting this into effect. I am still not convinced that we have overcome this principal difficulty. And I should like your congress, at which practical workers in collective farming from all parts of Russia have the opportunity of sharing their experience, to put an end to all doubts and to prove that we are mastering, are beginning to master in practice, the task of consolidating the *artels*, co-operative farms and communes and every form of enterprise for collective and social agriculture generally. But in order to prove this, real, *practical* results are required.

When we read the rules of the agricultural communes or books

devoted to this question, it might appear that we devote too much space in them to propaganda and the theoretical justification of the necessity of organising communes. Of course that is necessary, for without detailed propaganda, without explaining the advantages of co-operative agriculture, and without repeating this idea thousands and thousands of times we cannot expect interest to be aroused among the broad masses of peasants and a practical test to be undertaken of the methods of carrying it into effect. Of course, propaganda is necessary, and there is no need to fear repetition, for what may appear to us to be repetition is most likely for hundreds and thousands of peasants not repetition, but a truth revealed for the first time. And if it should occur to us that we are devoting too much attention to propaganda, it must be said that we ought to devote a hundred times more attention to it. And when I say this, I mean it in the sense that if we go to the peasant with general explanations of the advantages of organising agricultural communes, and at the same time are unable in actual fact to point to the practical advantage that will accrue to him from co-operative and artel farms, he will not have the slightest confidence in our propaganda.

The law says that the communes, artels and co-operative farms must assist the surrounding peasant population. But the state, the workers' government, is providing a fund of a billion rubles for the purpose of assisting the agricultural communes and artels. And, of course, if any commune were to assist the peasants out of this fund I am afraid it would only arouse ridicule among the peasants. And it would be absolutely justified. Every peasant will say "It goes without saying that if you are getting a fund of a billion rubles it means nothing to you to throw a little our way." I am afraid the peasant will only jeer, for he regards this matter very attentively and very distrustfully. The peasant has been accustomed for centuries to expect only oppression from the state power, and he is therefore in the habit of regarding everything that comes out of the state treasury with suspicion. And if the assistance given by the agricultural communes to the peasants will be given merely for the purpose of fulfilling the letter of the law, such assistance will be not only useless but harmful. For the name

"agricultural commune" is a great one, it is associated with the conception of communism. It will be a good thing if the communes in practice show that they are indeed seriously working for the improvement of peasant husbandry, that will undoubtedly increase the authority of the Communists and the Communist Party. But it has frequently happened that the communes have only succeeded in provoking an attitude of hostility, and the word "commune" has even at times become a call to fight communism. And this happened not only when stupid attempts were made to drive the peasants into the communes by force. The absurdity of this was so obvious that the Soviet government long ago forbade it. And I hope that if isolated examples of such coercion are to be met with now, they are very few, and that you will take advantage of the present congress to see to it that the last trace of this outrage is swept from the face of the Soviet Republic, and that the surrounding peasant population may not be able to point to a single instance in support of the old opinion that membership of a commune is in one way or another associated with coercion.

But even if we eliminate this old shortcoming and completely obliterate this outrage it will still be only a small fraction of what has to be done. For the necessity of the state helping the communes will still remain, and we would not be Communists and believers in introducing socialist economy if we did not give state aid to every kind of collective agricultural enterprise. We are obliged to do so for the added reason that it is in accordance with all our aims, and because we know that these co-operatives, artels and collective organisations are innovations, and if support is not given them by the working class in power they will not take root. In order that they should take root, and in view of the fact that the state is affording them monetary and every other kind of support, we must see to it that this does not provoke the ridicule of the peasants. What we must be most careful about is that the peasants should not say of the communards and members of artels and co-operatives that they are state pensioners, that they differ from the peasants only by the fact that they are receiving privileges. If we are to give land and subsidies for construction purposes out of the billion ruble fund, any fool will live somewhat

better than the ordinary peasant. What is there communistic here, the peasant will ask, and where is the improvement? What are we to respect them for?—If you pick out a few score, or a few hundred individuals and give them billions, of course they will work.

Such an attitude on the part of the peasants is most to be feared, and I should like to draw the attention of the comrades assembled at the congress to this question. It must be solved practically, so as to enable us to say that we have not only averted this danger, but have also found means whereby the peasant will not be led to think in this way but will, on the contrary, find in every commune and artel something which the state power is assisting, will find in them new methods of agriculture which show their advantages over the old methods not by books and speeches—that is not worth much—but in practice. Therein lies the difficulty of the problem, and that is why it is hard for us, who have only dry figures before us, to judge whether we have proved in practice that every commune and every artel is really superior to every enterprise of the old system and that the workers' government is here helping the peasant.

I think that, practically, it would be very desirable for the solution of this problem if you, who have a practical acquaintance with a number of neighbouring communes, artels and co-operatives, worked out the methods of exercising real and practical control over the carrying out of the law which demands that the agricultural communes should give assistance to the surrounding population, over the way the transition to socialist agriculture is being put into effect and what concrete forms it is taking in each commune, artel and co-operative farm; how it is actually being put into practice, how many co-operatives and communes are in fact putting it into practice, and how many are only preparing to do so, how many cases have been observed when the communes have given assistance, and what character this assistance bears—philanthropic or socialist.

If out of the aid given them by the state the communes and artels set aside a portion for the peasants, that will only give the peasant grounds for believing that it is merely a case of being helped by kind-hearted people, but not by any means proof of a

transition to a socialist system. The peasants have for ages been accustomed to regard such "kind hearted people" with suspicion. We must know how to keep a check on the way this new social order has manifested itself, by what methods it is being proved to the peasants that co-operative *artel* cultivation of the soil is better than individual peasant cultivation of the soil and that it is better *not* because of state aid. We must be able to show the peasants the practical realisation of this new order even *without* state aid.

Unfortunately, I shall not be able to attend your congress to the very end, and I shall therefore be unable to take part in working out these methods of control. But I am certain that with the aid of the comrades in charge of our Commissariat of Agriculture you will succeed in finding these methods. I read with great satisfaction an article by the People's Commissar of Agriculture, Comrade Sereda,* in which he stressed the point that the communes and co-operatives must not isolate themselves from the surrounding peasant population but must endeavour to improve the latter's husbandry. A commune must be organised so as to serve as a model and so that the neighbouring peasants should feel attracted to it. We must be able to set them a practical example of how to assist people who are conducting their husbandry under these severe conditions, which are marked by a goods shortage and by general collapse. In order to define the practical methods of effecting this, extremely detailed instructions must be drawn up, which should enumerate all forms of assistance that can be given to the surrounding peasant population which should ask each commune what it has done to help the peasants and which should indicate the methods by which each of the existing two thousand communes and nearly four thousand *artels* may become a nucleus capable of strengthening the conviction in the peasants that collective agriculture, as a transition to socialism, is a beneficial thing, and not a whimsy or the ravings of a disordered mind.

I have already said that the law demands that the communes should assist the surrounding peasant population. We could not express ourselves otherwise in the law, or give any practical indications. It was our business to establish the general principle, and to count on it that enlightened comrades in the localities

would scrupulously apply the law and be able to find a thousand ways of applying it practically in the concrete economic conditions of each given locality. But, of course, every law can be evaded, even under a pretence of observing it. And so the law on assisting the peasants, if it is applied unscrupulously, may become a mere game, and achieve results quite contrary to those intended.

The communes must be developed in such a way that, by contact with them and by the economic help they give, the conditions of peasant husbandry will begin to change, and every commune, artel and co-operative will be able to make the beginnings of an improvement in these conditions and put them into effect, thereby proving to the peasants in practice that this change can only be beneficial for them.

You may naturally think that we shall be told that in order to improve husbandry we need conditions that differ from the present conditions of economic disruption caused by the four years of imperialist war and the two years of civil war forced on us by the imperialists. With such conditions as now exist in our country, how can one think of any widespread improvement of agricultural enterprises? God only help us to carry on somehow and not die of starvation!

If doubts of this kind are expressed, it will be only natural. But if I had to reply to such objections, I would say. Assume that owing to the disorganisation of economic life, to economic disruption, goods shortage, poor transport and the destruction of cattle and implements, an extensive improvement of agriculture cannot be effected. But there is no doubt that a certain, not extensive, improvement is possible in a number of individual cases. But let us assume that even this is not the case. Does that mean that the communes cannot produce changes in the life of the surrounding peasants and cannot show that collective agricultural enterprises are not an artificial hothouse growth, but a new form of assistance to the toiling peasantry on the part of the workers' government, and an aid to the former in its struggle against the kulaks? I am convinced that even if the matter is regarded in this way, even if we grant the impossibility of effecting improvements under the present conditions of economic disruption, nevertheless

if there are honest Communists in the communes and the artels, a very great deal may be accomplished

In order that what I am saying may not appear groundless, I would refer to what in our cities has been called *subbotniks*. This is the name given to work performed gratis by the city workers, over and above what is demanded from every worker, and devoted for the space of several hours to some public need. They were initiated originally in Moscow by the employees of the Moscow Kazan Railway. One of the appeals of the Soviet government pointed out that the Red Army men at the front are making unprecedented sacrifices, and that, in spite of all the hardships they are obliged to undergo, they are gaining unprecedented victories over our enemies, and at the same time stated that we can clinch our victories only if such heroism and such self sacrifice are displayed not only at the front, but also in the rear. The Moscow workers responded to this appeal by organising *subbotniks*. There can be no doubt that the workers of Moscow are undergoing greater hardship and want than the peasants, and if you were to acquaint yourselves with their living conditions and were to ponder over the fact that in spite of these incredibly hard conditions they have begun to carry out *subbotniks*, you would agree that one cannot by any reference to arduous conditions avoid realising what can be done under any conditions by applying the same method as was applied by the Moscow workers. Nothing helped so much to enhance the prestige of the Communist Party in the towns, to increase the respect of the non Party workers for the Communists, as these *subbotniks* when they ceased to be isolated instances and when the non Party workers saw in practice that the members of the governing Communist Party are bearing duties, and that the Communists admit new members to the Party not in order that they may enjoy the advantages connected with the position of a governing party, but that they may set an example of real communist labour *i.e.*, labour performed gratis. Communism is the highest stage in the development of socialism, when people work because they realise the necessity of working for the common good. We know that we cannot establish a socialist system now—God grant that it may be established in our children's time, or perhaps

in our grandchildren's time. But we say that the members of the governing Communist Party bear the greater burden of the difficulties in the fight against capitalism, mobilise the best Communists for the front, and demand of such as cannot be used for this purpose that they perform subbotniks.

Practising these subbotniks, which have become a widespread phenomenon in every large industrial city, participation in which the Party now demands from every one of its members, punishing non fulfilment even by expulsion from the Party—practising this method in the communes, artels and co operatives, you may, and must, even under the worst conditions, bring it about that the peasant shall regard every commune, artel and co operative as an association which is distinguished not by the fact that it receives state subsidies, but by the fact that within it are gathered some of the best representatives of the working class, who not only preach socialism for others, but are themselves capable of realising it, who are capable of showing that even under the worst conditions they can conduct their husbandry in a communist manner and help the surrounding peasant population in every possible way. No reservations are possible on this question, no excuses can be permitted, such as the goods shortage, or absence of seed, or loss of cattle. This will be a test which, in any case, will enable us to say definitely to what extent the difficult task we have taken on ourselves has been mastered in practice.

I am certain that this general meeting of representatives of communes, co operatives and artels will discuss this and will realise that the application of this method will in fact serve as a powerful instrument for the consolidation of the communes and the co operatives, and will achieve such practical results that nowhere in Russia will there be a single case of hostility towards the communes, artels and co operatives on the part of the peasants. But that is not enough. What is required is that the peasants should be sympathetic towards them. For our part, we representatives of the Soviet government will do everything in our power to help to bring this about and to see to it that state assistance from the billion ruble fund, or from other sources, shall be given only in cases when closer relations between the toiling communes or artels and the

life of the surrounding peasants have actually been established. Unless these conditions are fulfilled we consider any assistance given to the artels and the co-operatives not only valueless, but definitely harmful. Assistance given by the communes to the surrounding peasants must not be regarded as assistance which is merely given out of superfluity, this assistance must be socialist assistance, *i e*, it must enable the peasants to replace their isolated, individual farming by co-operative farming. And this can be done only by the subbotnik method of which I have here spoken.

If you learn from the experience of the city workers, who, although living in conditions immeasurably worse than those of the peasants, initiated the movement for subbotniks, I am certain that, with your general and unanimous support, we shall bring it about that each of the several thousand existing communes and artels will become a genuine nursery for communist ideas and views, a practical example to the peasants showing them that, although it is still a small and feeble growth, it is nevertheless not an artificial, hothouse growth, but a true growth of the new socialist system. Only then shall we gain a lasting victory over the old ignorance, impoverishment and want, and only then will the difficulties we meet in our future course hold out no terrors for us.

PART III

THE ORGANISATION AND ADMINISTRATION OF NATIONAL ECONOMY IN THE PERIOD OF WAR COMMUNISM

1

SPEECH DELIVERED AT THE SECOND ALL RUSSIAN CON-
GRESS OF COUNCILS OF NATIONAL ECONOMY *

December 25, 1918

COMRADES, permit me first of all to say a few words about the international position of the Soviet Republic. Of course, you all know that the main problem in the international situation is the victory of Anglo French American imperialism and its attempt to seize final possession of the world, and, particularly, to destroy Soviet Russia.

You know that at the beginning of the October Revolution not only the majority of representatives of the West European bourgeoisie but also a certain section of the Russian bourgeoisie believed that what was going on in our country was a sort of socialist experiment which could have no essential and serious significance from a world standpoint. Particularly arrogant and short sighted representatives of the bourgeoisie frequently declared that the Communist experiments in Russia could perform no other service than to give satisfaction to German imperialism. And, unfortunately, there were people who allowed themselves to be blinded by such tricks and who, incidentally, regarded the incredibly onerous and incredibly coercive terms of the Brest Peace from this point of view **. As a matter of fact, wittingly or unwittingly, these people were fostering a class petty bourgeois patriotism and regarding the growing unfavourableness of the situation not from the standpoint of its world significance, not from the standpoint of the development of events on a world scale, but from the standpoint that German imperialism is the chief enemy, and that this coercive and unusually extortionate peace was a triumph for the German imperialists.

And indeed, if we regard the events of that period from the standpoint of the situation in Russia, more ruinous terms cannot

be imagined. But the folly of the calculations of the German imperialists became apparent within a few months, when the Germans were seizing the Ukraine and were bragging to the German bourgeoisie, and still more to the German proletariat, that the moment had arrived to reap the fruits of imperialist policy and that in the Ukraine they would secure everything that Germany needed. Thus was a very short sighted, a purblind estimate of events.

But it soon became apparent that only those who regarded events from the standpoint of the influence they might exert on the development of the world revolution were right. It was the example of the Ukraine, which had undergone unparalleled sufferings, that showed that the only correct estimate of events was one based on a study and careful observation of the international proletarian revolution. Imperialism found itself hard pressed by the toiling masses, whose condition was an intolerably difficult one. And we can now see that the case of the Ukraine was one of the links in the process of growth of the world revolution.

The German imperialists were able to procure from the Ukraine far less material benefits than they had anticipated. On the other hand, this transformation of the war into a patently predatory war demoralised the entire German army, while contact with Soviet Russia started in this army of the toiling masses of Germany the process of disintegration which made itself felt within a few months. And now that Anglo American imperialism has become still more arrogant, and regards itself as an overlord whom nobody dare gainsay, we do not close our eyes to the extremely difficult position in which we find ourselves. The Entente powers have now overstepped the bounds of what is possible for bourgeois policy: they have overdone it, just as the German imperialists overdid it in February and March 1918 in concluding the Brest Peace. The same cause that led to the collapse of German imperialism rises plainly before us in relation to Anglo French imperialism. The latter has imposed on Germany terms of peace which are far worse, far more onerous than those which Germany imposed on us at the time of the conclusion of the Brest Peace¹. And in doing so,

¹ /e the terms of the armistice concluded on November 11, 1918 which formed the basis of the Peace of Versailles signed on June 28 1919—Ed

Anglo French imperialism overstepped the mark, which will later prove fatal to it. Beyond this mark imperialism forfeits the hope of holding the toiling masses in obedience.

In spite of the uproar raised by the chauvinists in connection with the defeat and destruction of Germany, in spite of the fact that the war is officially not yet over, we already see in France and Great Britain signs of a big rise of the working class movement and a change of position on the part of the politicians who formerly held the chauvinist standpoint but who are now opposing their governments because of the attempts to meddle in Russian affairs. If we add to this the news that has been recently appearing in the newspapers of the attempts at fraternisation by British and American soldiers, if we remember that imperialist armies consist of citizens to whom deceit and threats are being applied, it may be admitted that Soviet Russia is standing on fairly firm ground. With this general picture of world war and revolution in mind, we are absolutely calm, and regard the future with complete confidence, and we assert that Anglo French imperialism has gone to such extremes that it has overstepped all the bounds of a peace practicable for the imperialists, that it is being threatened with complete collapse.

The tasks that the Entente powers—who are continuing the imperialist war—have set themselves are to stifle the revolution and to seize and divide up all the countries of the world. Yet, in spite of the fact that Great Britain and America have been much farther removed from the horrors of war than Germany, that their democratically organised bourgeoisie is more far sighted than the German bourgeoisie, the British and American imperialists have lost their heads and are now compelled, owing to objective conditions, to undertake a task that is beyond their powers, they are compelled to maintain troops for purposes of pacification and suppression.

Nevertheless, our present situation demands a maximum exertion of effort. And we must now value a month more than we formerly valued a decade, because we are now doing a hundred times more. We are not only safeguarding the Russian Republic but are performing a great work for the world proletariat. Intense

exertion of effort is demanded of us, we are being called upon to perform a great piece of work in compiling a plan of organisation and in defining general relations

Passing to the question of our immediate tasks, I must say that the main thing has already been accomplished, and that in the interval between the First and Second Congresses of the Councils of National Economy the principal type of work has been outlined. A general plan of administration of industry, of the nationalised enterprises, of administration of whole branches of industry, has been drawn up and placed on a firm basis with the help of the trade unions. And in this connection we shall combat, as we combated heretofore, all syndicalist, separatist, local and regional tendencies, which only do harm to the cause.*

The military situation imposes great responsibility and heavy duties on us. Corporate management with the participation of the trade unions is essential. Collegiums are necessary, but corporate management must not be allowed to become a hindrance to practical work. And when I personally had occasion to observe the way our economic tasks are being performed by our enterprises, what particularly struck me was that the executive part of our work, being associated with corporate discussion, at times impedes the accomplishment of these tasks. This transition from corporate executive methods to personal responsibility is the urgent problem of the day.

We shall unconditionally demand of all the Councils of National Economy, the Glavks and the Centres,** that the corporate system of management shall not take the form of empty discussion, resolution writing, compilation of plans and regional patriotism. That would be intolerable. We shall insistently demand that every worker in the Councils of National Economy and every member of a Glavk should know for which branch of business, in a narrow sense, he is answerable. When we receive reports that raw materials are available but people do not know, could not determine how much when we hear outcries that warehouses filled with goods are under lock and key while the peasants are demanding and justly demanding, exchange of commodities, refusing to surrender grain in exchange for devaluated paper, we must know what member

of what corporate board is engaging in red tape, and we must say that this member is answerable for the red tape and will be made to answer for it from the standpoint of national defence, i.e., he will be liable to immediate arrest and court martial, even though he be a representative of the most important union in the most important Glavk. This person must be made to answer for the practical performance of the most simple and elementary things, such as keeping an inventory of goods lying in the warehouses and their proper utilisation. It is in the performance of just such elementary duties that obstructions most frequently arise with us.

From the historical standpoint this should not evoke any misgivings, because in the development of new and hitherto unparalleled forms a certain amount of time must be spent in outlining the general plan of organisation, which then becomes developed in the actual process of work. On the contrary, it is astonishing how much has been done in this field in so short a time. But from the military standpoint, from the socialist standpoint, when the proletariat is demanding a maximum display of energy on our part in order that there should be bread and warm coats, that the workers should be less in want of footwear, foodstuffs, and so forth, the exchange of commodities must be increased three times and ten times as much as at present. This aspect of the matter must be made the immediate task of the Councils of National Economy.

What we require is practical work by people who will be responsible for grain being exchanged for goods, for grain not lying unutilised, who will be responsible not only for proper account being kept of the raw materials in every warehouse, but also for their not lying unutilised, and for real assistance being given in the sphere of production.

As to the co-operatives, they also must be approached in a businesslike way. When I hear members of Councils of National Economy asserting that co-operation is a matter for shopkeepers, that there are Mensheviks in the co-operatives, that there are White Guards in the co-operatives, and that we must therefore keep them at arm's length, I declare that these people are displaying complete ignorance of the matter. They absolutely fail to understand the needs of the present moment when, instead of pointing to the good

co operators, as experts, they refer to them as people who are stretching out a hand to the White Guards I assert that they are not minding their own business we have the Extraordinary Commissions for detecting White Guards, and they should be left to do their business But the co operatives are the only apparatus created by capitalist society which we must utilise And therefore every attempt to replace action by arguments that are the embodiment of short sightedness, gross stupidity and intellectual conceit, will be punished by us mercilessly in accordance with military law

When to this day, after the lapse of a year, matters are not organised as they should be, when, confronted by practical problems, we still continue to discuss plans, while the country is demanding bread, felt boots and the punctual distribution of raw materials, such red tape and meddling in other people's affairs is not to be tolerated

In our apparatus elements are sometimes to be found who incline towards the White Guards, but if there is Communist control in all our institutions these people cannot acquire political significance or play a leading part There cannot be the slightest doubt on this point But we need them as practical workers, and there is no need to fear them I have no doubt that Communists are excellent people, that there are excellent organisers among them, but years and years will be required to obtain such organisers in large number, and we cannot wait

But we can now obtain these workers from among the bourgeoisie, from among the experts and intellectuals And we shall demand of all comrades working in the Councils of National Economy What, sirs, have you done in order to enlist experienced people in the work, what have you done to secure experts, salesmen, efficient bourgeois co operators, who must be got to work for you no worse than they worked for the Kolupayevs and Razuvaevs? * It is time to abandon the old prejudices, and to enlist all the experts we need in our work Every corporate board, every Communist executive must know this It is in such an attitude that the pledge of success lies

Enough of idle talk! The time has come to proceed to practical work in order to release our country from the ring in which the

imperialists have encircled it. This is the position every Soviet and co-operative organisation must adopt. We need action and action! If, having taken over power, the proletariat is unable to utilise that power, is unable to put the problem practically and solve it practically, it will forfeit a great deal. It is time to abandon the prejudice that only Communists, among whom there are excellent people without question, can perform any definite piece of work. It is time to abandon this prejudice, we need workers who know their job, and we must enlist them all in the work.

Capitalism has left us a great heritage, it has left us its big experts. And we must unquestionably utilise them, utilise them on a broad and mass scale, we must find work for every one of them. We have absolutely no time to spend on training experts from among our Communists, because everything now depends on practical work and practical results.

We must demand that every member of a collegium, every member of a responsible institution should take charge of a job and answer for it completely. It is absolutely essential that every one who takes charge of a definite branch of work should answer for everything, both for production and distribution. I must tell you that the situation of our Soviet Republic is such that given a proper distribution of bread and other products we can hold on for a very, very long time. But this absolutely demands a proper policy of definitely abandoning all red tape, we must act rapidly and with decision, we must appoint definite people for definite responsible work, every one of these people must definitely know his job, must definitely answer for it, answer for it with his head. This is the policy we are pursuing in the Council of People's Commissars and in the Council of Defence, and it is to this policy that all the activities of the Councils of National Economy and the co-operatives must be subordinated. This is the path the policy of the proletariat must pursue.

We must see to it that the wheels of commodity exchange revolve properly. This is the whole problem at the present time. An enormous amount of work has to be done in this sphere, and, in conclusion, I emphatically call on all of you to take your share in this work.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

*Speech Delivered at the Ninth Congress of the
Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks)*

*March 31, 1920 **

COMRADES, first of all two small comments Comrade Sapronov has continued to accuse me of forgetfulness, but the question he raised he left unexplained He continued to assure us that the decree on flax collections is a violation of the decision of the All Russian Central Executive Committee I assert that you cannot at Party congresses hurl unfounded accusations in this way, and very serious accusations at that Of course, if the Council of People's Commissars has violated a decision of the All Russian Central Executive Committee it deserves to be brought to trial But why is it that since February 10 to this day no complaint has been received that this decree is a violation? We get absolutely unfounded accusations which are easy to hurl, but such methods of fighting are absolutely frivolous

Comrade Milyutin says that there are practically no points of difference between us, and that therefore it looks as if Lenin who is against squabbling, is himself provoking this squabble But Comrade Milyutin is rather distorting matters which he ought not to do We had the first draft of a resolution drawn up by Comrade Trotsky, which was then gone over corporately in the Central Committee We sent this draft to Comrades Milyutin and Rykov They returned it, declaring that they would give battle on it Those are the actual facts After we had developed agitation and obtained allies, they organised a comprehensive opposition at the congress, and it was only when they saw that nothing came of it that they began to say that they were almost in agreement That, of course, is so, but the matter must be carried to its conclusion, and it must be recorded that your agreement signifies your

complete failure after the opposition had come forward here and tried to consolidate itself on the question of corporate management. Only when Comrade Milyutin had spoken fifteen minutes and his time was up, did he remember that it would be well to place the matter on a businesslike footing. That is quite true. But I am afraid it is too late, although Comrade Rykov still has to reply to the discussion, the opposition cannot be saved. Had the advocates of corporate management during the last two months done what they are calling for, had they given us even a single example not of the sort that there is one decree and one assistant, had they given us a questionnaire with a precise investigation of the problem, comparing corporate management with individual management as was decided on by the Congress of the Councils of National Economy and by the Central Committee, we would have been much the wiser, we would not at the congress have had discussions of principle that are rather out of place and the advocates of corporate management might have advanced matters. Their position would indeed have been a strong one if they could have instanced at least ten factories placed in similar conditions and managed on the corporate principle and have compared them in a businesslike way with the position of affairs in factories managed on the individual principle. We could have allowed any speaker an hour for such a report, and such a speaker would have advanced matters considerably. We might perhaps have established practical gradations in this question of corporate management. But the fact is that not a single one of them, neither members of the Councils of National Economy nor trade unionists, who should have had practical data, gave us anything, because they had nothing to give. They have nothing, absolutely nothing!

Comrade Rykov made the objection here that I want to remake the French Revolution, that I deny that the bourgeoisie intergrew with the feudal system. That is not what I said. What I said was that when the bourgeoisie replaced the feudal system it took the feudal lords and learnt from them how to govern, and this does not contradict the fact that the bourgeoisie intergrew with the feudal system. Such intergrowth always occurred, and it is occurring in the case of the working class. What are the trade unions if not that

the workers are intergrowing with the state? More than half a century ago it was said that the trade unions were the nuclei without which, when the proletariat seized power, there would be nobody to take over power. The mistake of the reformers was not that they did not deny intergrowth, but that they did not see that the working class was gradually taking possession of a number of posts, that it was taking over a number of state functions! Will anybody deny that the proletariat in Germany or Great Britain is now gradually becoming intergrown with the state administration? And my theses that the working class after it has seized power begins to put its principles into effect have not been refuted by anybody. After it has seized power, the working class maintains it, preserves it and consolidates it like every class, by means of a change in property relations and by a new constitution. This is my first fundamental thesis, and it is indisputable. The second thesis, namely, that every new class learns from the preceding class and takes over members of the administration from the old class, is also an absolute truth. And, lastly, my third thesis is that the working class must increase the number of administrators from among its own ranks, create schools and train cadres of workers on a national scale. These three theses are indisputable, and they run fundamentally counter to the theses of the trade unions.

At the meeting of the fraction, when we examined their theses, and when Comrade Bukharin and I were beaten, I told Comrade Tomsky that in your theses point 7 is the result of utter theoretical confusion.* In this point it is stated that

"The basic principle of structure of the organs of regulation and management of industry, the only principle that can secure the participation of the broad unaffiliated working class masses through the trade unions, is the existing principle of corporate management in industry, beginning with the Presidium of the Supreme Council of National Economy and ending with factory managements. Only in special cases, and by agreement between the Presidium of the Supreme Council of National Economy and the All-Russian Central Council of Trade Unions, or the Central Committees of the trade unions concerned, should individual management be permitted in certain enterprises, and only on the absolute condition that the trade unions and their organs should exercise control over the 'individual' administrators."

This is sheer nonsense, because the role of the working class in the conquest of state power, the interrelation of methods are all

muddled! This sort of thing cannot be tolerated. This sort of thing drags us back theoretically. The same must be said of the democratic centralism of Comrades Sapronov, Maximovsky and Ossinsky. Comrade Ossinsky forgets this when he expresses the idea that I call democratic centralism nonsense. You cannot distort things in that way! What has the question of appointments, of endorsement by local organisations got to do with it? You can have things endorsed by collegiums and you can also appoint collegiums. The question has no connection whatever with the matter under discussion. It is said that democratic centralism consists not only in the fact that the All Russian Central Executive Committee rules, but also in the fact that the All Russian Central Executive Committee rules through local organisations. What has corporate management or individual management got to do with this?

Comrade Trotsky recalled a report he made in 1918 and, reading the speech he then made, pointed out that at that time not only did we argue about fundamental questions but that a definite decision was also taken by the All Russian Central Executive Committee.* Having dug up my old pamphlet *The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government*,¹ which I had completely forgotten, I find that the question of individual management was not only raised but was also approved in the theses of the All Russian Central Executive Committee. We work in such a way that we forget not only what we have written but also what has been decided by the All Russian Central Executive Committee, and subsequently refer to that decision. Here are some excerpts from this pamphlet:

"The conscious representatives of petty bourgeois laxity (in all probability most of them are unconscious representatives) would like to see in this granting of 'unlimited' (i.e., dictatorial) powers to individual persons a departure from the collegiate principle, from democracy and from other principles of Soviet government. Here and there, among Left Socialist Revolutionaries, a positively hooligan agitation, i.e., agitation appealing to bad instincts and to the small proprietor striving to 'grab as much as possible,' has been developed against the dictatorship decree. Large scale machine industry—which is precisely the material productive source and foundation of socialism—calls for absolute and strict unity of will, which directs the joint labours of hundreds, thousands and tens of thousands of people. The technical, economic and historical necessity of this is obvious, and all those who have thought about socialism have

¹ Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. VII—Fd

always regarded it as one of the conditions of socialism—only thus can strict unity of will be ensured

But be that as it may *unquestioning submission* to a single will is absolutely necessary for the success of labour processes that are based on large scale machine industry. On the railways it is twice and three times as necessary

And our task, the task of the Communist Party, which is the class conscious expression of the strivings of the exploited for emancipation, is to appreciate this change, to understand that it is necessary, to take the lead of the exhausted masses who are wearily seeking a way out and lead them along the true path, along the path of labour discipline, along the path of co-ordinating the task of holding meetings and discussing the conditions of labour with the task of unquestioningly obeying the will of the Soviet leader of the dictator, *during work time*

The October victory of the toilers over the exploiters was required, a whole historical period was required in which the toilers themselves could first of all discuss the new conditions of life and the new tasks, in order to make possible the durable transition to superior forms of labour discipline, to the intelligent appreciation of the necessity of the dictatorship of the proletariat, to unquestioning obedience to the orders of individual representatives of the Soviet government *during work time*

We must learn to combine the 'meeting' democracy of the toiling masses—turbulent, surging, overflowing its banks like a spring flood—with *iron* discipline while at work, with unquestioning obedience to the will of a single person, the Soviet leader, while at work

On April 29, 1918, the All Russian Central Executive Committee adopted a resolution fully endorsing the basic propositions set forth in this report and instructed its presidium to embody the main propositions in the form of theses describing the basic duties of the Soviet government. We are thus reiterating what was approved two years ago in an official resolution of the All Russian Central Executive Committee! And we are now being dragged back on a question which has been decided long ago, a question which the All Russian Central Executive Committee has endorsed and explained, namely, that Soviet socialist democracy is not contradictory to individual management and dictatorship in any way, that the will of a class may sometimes be carried out by a dictator, who at times may do more alone and who is frequently more necessary. At any rate, the attitude in principle towards corporate management and individual management was not only explained a long time ago but was even endorsed by the All Russian Central Executive Committee. In this connection our congress is an illustration of a painful truth, that instead of advancing from the explanation of

questions of principle to concrete questions, we are advancing like crabs. If we do not rid ourselves of this mistake we shall never solve the economic problem.

I should also like to say a few words about certain remarks of Comrade Rykov's. He asserts that the Council of People's Commissars is putting obstacles in the way of the amalgamation of the economic Commissariats*. And when Comrade Rykov is told that he wants to swallow up Comrade Tsurupa, he replies "I am not averse to Tsurupa's swallowing me up, provided the economic Commissariats are amalgamated." I know where this may lead, and I must say that the attempt of the Supreme Council of National Economy to form a sort of separate *bloc* of economic Commissariats outside the Council of Defence and the Council of People's Commissars was ignored by the Central Committee and provoked an undesirable attitude. The Council of Defence has now been renamed the Council of Labour and Defence. You want to separate yourselves from the Commissariat of War, which is giving its best forces to the war and is an institution without which you cannot carry out even labour service, and we cannot carry out labour service without the People's Commissariat of Home Affairs. If you take the post we cannot send a letter without the Commissariat of Post and Telegraph. Take the People's Commissariat of Health. How will you conduct economic affairs if seventy per cent are down with typhus? It comes to this, that agreement must be reached on every matter, and an economic Commissariat set up for it. Why, you cannot make anything of a plan like that! Comrade Rykov had no serious argument. That is why this was opposed and why the Central Committee did not support it.

Further, Comrade Rykov joked about the *bloc* with Comrade Holtzmann which is proposed by Comrade Trotsky. I should like to say a few words: a *bloc* is always needed between Party groups that are in the right. This should always be an essential requisite for a correct policy. If Comrade Holtzmann, whom unfortunately, I know very little, but of whom I have heard as a representative of a certain current among the metal workers that particularly insists on sensible methods—which is stressed also in my theses—if it is from this standpoint that he insists on individual management,

that, of course, can only be extremely useful. A *bloc* with this current would be very useful indeed. If the representation of the trade unions is to be strengthened in the Central Committee it would be useful to have on it representatives also of this current—which, though it may be wrong on certain points, is nevertheless original and has a definite shade—side by side with the extreme representatives of corporate management, who are battling in the name of democracy, but who are mistaken. Let them both be represented on the Central Committee—and you will have a *bloc*. Let the Central Committee be so constituted that with the help of a *bloc* a field of operation may be found all the year round and not merely during the week a Party congress is held. We have always rejected the principle of regional representation, because it often leads to regional cliquism. When it is a question of closer fusion with the trade unions, we must keep our eyes open for every shade in the trade unions, we must have connections—it is essential that the Central Committee should be constituted in such a way that there will be a transmission belt to the broad masses of the trade unions (we have 600,000 Party members and 3,000,000 trade union members) which will connect the Central Committee simultaneously with the united will of the 600,000 Party members and the 3,000,000 trade union members. We cannot govern without such a transmission belt. The more of Siberia, the Kuban and the Ukraine we conquered, with their peasant population, the more difficult the problem became, and the more heavily the machine moved because the proletariat in Siberia is small, and in the Ukraine is weaker. But we know that the workers of the Don and of Nikolayev have directly rebuffed the defence of the semi-demagogic corporate management into which Comrade Sapronov lapsed. There can be no question but that the proletarian element in the Ukraine is different from the proletarian element in Petrograd, Moscow and Ivanovo Voznessensk, not because it is bad, but owing to purely historical reasons. It has not had the occasion to become steeled by hunger, cold and conflict as was the case with the Moscow and Petrograd proletarians. Therefore, such a contact with the trade unions, such a form of organisation of the Central Committee, is required that it may know every shade

not only among the 600,000 Party members but also among the 3,000,000 trade union members, so that it may at any moment be able to lead them all as one man! Such an organisation is essential. This is a fundamental interest, a political interest, without which the dictatorship of the proletariat will not be a dictatorship. If we are to have a *bloc*, let us have a *bloc*! Do not let us be afraid of it, but let us welcome it and practice it more vigorously and more extensively in the most central institutions of the Party.

THE CO OPERATIVES *

*Speech Delivered at the Ninth Congress of the
Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks)*

April 3, 1920

It was only last night and today that I had the opportunity of partially acquainting myself with both resolutions. I think that the resolution of the minority of the commission is more correct. Comrade Milyutin attacked it with a great battery of terrifying words, he discovered in it half measures, and even semi half measures, he accused it of opportunism. But it seems to me that the devil is not as black as he is painted. If you go to the root of the matter, you will find that it is precisely the arguments of Comrade Milyutin, who tried to place things on a basis of principle, that show, precisely from the practical, businesslike and Marxist point of view, the incorrectness and unsuitability of the resolution which Comrade Milyutin advocated. It is incorrect for the following reasons. Comrade Milyutin stated that his resolution, the resolution of the majority of the commission, advocates fusion with the volost executive committees, subordination to the volost executive committees, and that is why he regards his resolution as straightforward and decisive compared with the insufficiently revolutionary character of the resolution of the minority. During the long course of our revolutionary campaign we have seen that when our revolutionary actions were properly prepared they met with success, but when they were merely imbued with revolutionary fervour they ended in failure. What does the resolution of the minority of the commission say? The resolution of the minority says direct your attention to intensifying communist work within the consumers' societies and to securing a majority within them, first prepare the organs you want to hand things over to, and then you can hand them over

Compare this with the line pursued by Milyutin. He says the co-operatives are bad, therefore hand them over to the volost executive committees. But have you got a communist basis in the co-operatives you want to hand over? The essence of the matter—preparation—is evaded, only the final slogan is given. If this communist work has been done, and the organs which can take over and conduct this work are created, the transfer will be natural and there is no need to raise the question at a Party congress. But have you not shaken your fists at the peasants enough? Has not the Supreme Council of National Economy shaken its fist enough at the peasants and the co-operatives in the matter of the flax collection? If you recall the practical experience of our work in the localities and in the Council of People's Commissars, you will admit that this is a wrong attitude to take towards the matter, and that the resolution which declares that the work of communist training and preparation of cadres of workers is necessary is the right resolution, for otherwise the transfer will be impossible.

The second important question is the question of contacts with the consumers' co-operatives. Here Comrade Milyutin says some thing extremely inconsistent. If the consumers' co-operatives are not fulfilling all the tasks assigned to them—a thing that has been dealt with for two years in a number of decrees directed against the kulak—it must be remembered that the government means we can use against the kulak can be used also against the co-operative societies. And this is being done to its full extent. The most important thing now is to increase production and the amount of goods. If the consumers' co-operatives do not do this, they will be punished for it. But if, owing to their connection with the producing co-operatives, they give even a small increase of products, we must pay our respects to them and foster their initiative. If the consumers' co-operatives, in spite of their close and intimate local contact with production, do not give an increase, it will mean that they have not fulfilled the direct duty laid upon them by the Soviet government. If there are only two or three energetic comrades in an uyezd who are prepared to combat the kulaks and the bourgeoisie, the cause is won. Where was Comrade Chuchin's initiative repressed? He did not cite a single instance. But the idea that we

must connect the producing co operatives with the consumers' co-operatives, and be prepared to make every concession in order to increase the amount of products in the very near future, logically follows from our experience of the past two years. It in no way hampers either Communist or Soviet workers in their war on the kulak or bourgeois type of co operative. Far from hampering them, it provides them with a new weapon. If you are able to organise anything at all we will give you a bonus, but if you do not fulfil this task we shall beat you, not only because you are counter revolutionary—for that we have the Cheka, as was rightly pointed out here—no, we shall beat you because you are not fulfilling the task set by the state, by the Soviet government and by the proletariat.

Comrade Milyutin has not brought forward a single business-like argument against amalgamating the consumers' co operatives—all he said was that this seemed to him to be opportunism or a half measure. This is strange coming from Comrade Milyutin, who with Comrade Rykov was prepared to make big strides, but he came convinced that he cannot make even one tenth of a stride. From this aspect, connections with the consumers' co operatives will be an advantage, they will make it possible to tackle production immediately. All means are available to prevent interference in political work, but as to subordination in the production and economic sphere, that depends entirely on the People's Commissariat of Agriculture and the Supreme Council of National Economy. These means are adequate to enable you to control the co operatives.

We now pass to the third question, the question of nationalisation, which Milyutin advocated in such a manner that it was strange to hear him. A commission was set up. Comrade Krestinsky remained in a minority on the commission and Comrade Milyutin emerged victorious. But now he says "On the question of nationalisation I am prepared not to argue." But why then did the commission argue? If your standpoint is the same as that of Comrade Chuchin, you are wrong in renouncing nationalisation. It was asked here why the kulaks cannot be nationalised if the capitalists have been nationalised. It is not surprising that this argument provoked

ilarity here And indeed, however the well to do peasants, those who resort to exploiting the labour of others, are counted, they amount to not less than half a million, perhaps even a million How do you propose to nationalise them? It is fantastic We have not the means for that just now

Comrade Chuchin is absolutely right when he says that there is a large number of counter revolutionaries in the co operatives But that is a refrain from a different opera Mention was quite rightly made here of the Extraordinary Commission If, owing to your short sightedness, you cannot expose individual leaders of the co operatives, install a single Communist to detect this counter revolution, and, if he is a good Communist—and a good Communist is at the same time a good Chekist—when placed in a co operative society he should bag at least two counter revolutionary co operators

That is why Comrade Chuchin is wrong when he advocates immediate nationalisation It would be good, but it is impossible, because we are dealing with a class which is less accessible to us and which under no circumstances is amenable to nationalisation We have not even nationalised all the industrial enterprises By the time an order of the Glavks and Centers reaches the localities it proves to be absolutely impotent it becomes submerged in a sea of documents, not to speak of the absence of roads, telegraph, and so on It is therefore impossible to speak of the nationalisation of the co operatives now Comrade Milyutin is also wrong in principle He feels that his position is weak and thinks that he can simply withdraw this point But then, Comrade Milyutin, you are undermining your own resolution, you are issuing a certificate to the effect that the resolution of the minority is right, for the spirit of your resolution—to subordinate them to the volost executive committees (that is exactly what is said in the first clause—"take measures")—is a Chekist spirit, wrongly introduced into an economic question The other resolution says that the first thing is to increase the number of Communists, to intensify Communist propaganda and agitation, and that a basis must be created There is nothing grandiloquent here, no promises of a land flowing with milk and honey But if there are Communists in the localities they

know what is to be done, and there is no need to explain to Comrade Chuchin where counter revolutionaries are taken to. Secondly, an organ must be created. Create an organ, and check it in action, check whether production is increasing—that is what the resolution of the minority says. First of all create a basis and then—then we shall see. What must be done will follow logically from this. Decrees to the effect that counter revolutionaries should be handed over to the Extraordinary Commission, and if there is no Extraordinary Commission to the Revolutionary Committee, are proposed in sufficient abundance. We need less fist shaking. We must adopt the resolution of the minority, which lays down a basic line.

SPEECH DELIVERED AT THE THIRD ALL-RUSSIAN
CONGRESS OF TEXTILE WORKERS *

April 19, 1920

COMRADES, permit me in thanking you for your welcome to convey to you the greetings of the Council of People's Commissars

We are all at present under the fresh impression of the Party congress just concluded and the resolutions it passed ¹ You are all also aware of the important tasks which the Party congress has laid on the workers, the peasants and the toiling masses of the Soviet Republic generally. The substance of these tasks is the creation of a united labour front

At the present moment, when, to the good fortune and welfare of the Russian proletariat, the civil war has been successfully ended, when there remains only the menace of Poland which is being guided by the zeal of the imperialists of Western Europe, we are facing an incredibly difficult transition to the building up of our internal life

In order to explain the tremendous change, in order to explain the difficulties that are now confronting the working class, permit me to describe the chief stages in the development towards the communist system through which the Russian proletariat has passed

Ignorant and unenlightened peasants finding themselves for the first time in a factory well equipped and supplied with the marvels of modern technology, used to be filled with amazement and overwhelmed by the unaccustomed magnificence of the factory. The ignorant soul of the peasant would regard the factory owner as his benefactor and provider, who furnished him with work, and without whom a working man cannot subsist. The helpless worker, coming from the remote and primitive life of the village into the

¹ The Ninth Congress of the Russian Communist Party held March 29-April 4 1920 —*Ed*

seething cauldron of the factory, where he secured more tolerable conditions of life and the possibility of subsisting, would fall under the oppressive yoke of capitalist exploitation. Everybody knows how the workers of Russia and of other countries suffered during this gloomy period. But then we saw how the worker would gradually emancipate himself from his state of peasant backwardness and downtroddenness and begin to rise to a higher level of development, we saw the appearance of the first attempts at resisting the oppressors—strikes, the attempts of the disunited proletarian masses to organise in the trade unions, we saw how the worker would begin to sense a new force within himself, we saw that any strike, no matter how insignificant its results, would create something invaluable, novel, important, rich in content. A strike would teach the worker to realise that union with other workers constitutes a force, a powerful force capable of bringing the machines to a standstill and transforming the slave into a free man able to take advantage of the benefits which belong by right to their producer. We all know the picture of the development of the strike movement during the last few decades, its gradual transformation from small and disunited strikes into widely organised strikes. In 1905, the strike movement swept like a mighty wave all over Russia. As the organised struggle against the capitalists, in the form of strikes grows, the worker acquires a hitherto unknown power. In this connection the trade unions take a foremost place. The workers come to realise that all the achievements of technology, all the machines and implements of production which the capitalists use in their own interests and against the interests of the proletariat can and must become the possession of the proletariat. This is a new phase, a phase of organised resistance to exploiting tendencies. The worker is no longer a limp and helpless tool in the hands of the oppressors. His whole environment leads him to the conviction that a constant, tireless and unyielding struggle is required. The worker endeavours to secure a certain improvement in his economic conditions, an increase of wages or a reduction of hours. At this stage of the trade union movement hopes and dreams are directed to securing the elements of a decent life.

But there came a time when although it had at one time

represented a tremendous advance, even this level of class consciousness of the proletariat proved inadequate. Conditions demanded a further advance.

The capitalists of the world had grown insolent, having stifled the working class masses, they finally threw them into the jaws of the World War, organised both in order further to oppress the proletariat, which was struggling to emancipate itself, and in order to rob each other of territory. The imperialist pirates, armed to the teeth, launched into the fray. They tried to convince the worker that the war was being waged in the great cause of emancipation of humanity. But the worker did not remain blind long. The Peace of Brest Litovsk, the Peace of Versailles, the seizure of all the colonies by Great Britain and France were sufficient to open the eyes of the workers to the true state of affairs. We have learnt that during the World War ten million people were killed, twenty million maimed, and all this only that the pirates might grow still richer.

And having matured, the workers rise against the yoke of capital, the social revolution breaks out, started by the events of October. Our duty is now not merely to be members of our trade union organisations—that is not enough. The workers must rise to a higher level, so that they may cease to be an oppressed class and become a ruling class. We cannot count on the peasants yet. They are disunited and impotent and it will be a long time before they emerge from their state of unenlightenment. The peasants can be brought out of the murk of ignorance only by the class which has itself come from the peasants, which has learnt to understand the power of organisation and has been able to secure a better life—and not merely under capitalism, for that was secured by the workers of the West, which, however, did not save them from the war. The worker must understand that he is facing a new and far more difficult task, namely to take over the administration of the state. The worker must realise that as long as private property remains, as long as capitalism is not smashed, no one who lives at the expense of others should be allowed to possess power.

This is what the Soviet government is striving for, and the sympathies of the world proletariat for the Soviet government are

growing with extraordinary rapidity. When it created the new proletarian state the working class assumed a tremendous burden. The worker can destroy the exploiting classes and bring about socialism only hand in hand with the peasants. The peasants are still conducting their husbandry in an individual way, selling their surplus on the open market and thereby helping to preserve the power of a handful of pirates. The peasants do not do this wittingly, for they live under conditions which are entirely different from those of the workers. But free trade means a return to capitalist servitude. And in order to avoid it labour must be organised in a new way, and nobody but the proletariat can do this.

The worker is now not only a member of his trade union organisation. Such a view would imply a return to the past. The fight against capital is not yet over. Capitalism is still impeding the measures of the Soviet government, it is doing so by bag trading, Sukharev markets * and so forth. This force can be resisted only by the strength of the workers' organisations constructed on new principles, based not on their narrow production interests, but on the interests of the whole state. Only if the whole working class, irrespective of profession, succeeds in uniting as a ruling class and in creating a united army of labour will it earn the respect of the world and the following of the peasantry.

The peasants, having convinced themselves that Kolchak and Denikin were smashed by the strength of the proletariat, have already begun to feel the firm hand of a good manager. But they will gain complete confidence in the proletariat only when attempts to restore capitalism will no longer be possible. Only then will the peasant understand that there is no place for kulaks and parasites in a proletarian country. But at present the peasant does not fully believe that the proletariat can cope with its great task.

The unparalleled sufferings consciously borne by the proletariat of Russia during the past two years in the front ranks of the Red Army are not yet at an end. New hardships face us, which will be the more severe the greater our victories on the Red front. Wide territories have been conquered in Siberia and the Ukraine where there is no proletariat like the proletariat of Moscow, Petrograd and Ivanovo-Voznesensk, which has shown in actual deed that it

will not surrender the conquests of the revolution at any price. The class conscious workers must penetrate every pore of the state power, they must know how to approach the peasants and organise them in the interests of the class which has flung off the yoke of the landlords and is building up a state without capitalists. Self sacrifice and iron discipline are required. The entire proletariat, like one man, must accomplish on the labour front the unparalleled marvels it accomplished on the bloody front. Many at first thought that the revolution was a hopeless cause. The utter collapse of the army, mass desertion from the front, and lack of shells are what we inherited from Kerensky. The Russian proletariat was able to knit together and consolidate the scattered forces and to create a united and stalwart Red Army. The Red Army has performed miracles in smashing the resistance of the capitalists, who were supported by the capitalists of the whole world. But the tasks to be performed on the labour front are immeasurably more difficult. But while all the Red Army needed was men, now we must throw on to the labour front all the able bodied forces of the country—men, women, and even adolescents. We need an iron discipline, and that with us Russians is a weak point. We must display determination, endurance, firmness and unanimity. We must allow nothing to daunt us. Everybody and everything must be used to save the workers' and peasants' government and communism.

The war is not over, it is continuing on the bloodless front. Here the enemy is still stronger than we are, this must be admitted. The small masters who sell their products on the open market are being assisted by world capital, which on the one hand is prepared to re-establish trade relations and on the other is prepared to stifle the proletariat and Soviet Russia.

The four millions of our proletariat must be prepared for new sacrifices, new privations and new hardships no less than those of the war. And only then can we hope finally to smash the enemy. The peasant, who is still temporising and vacillating, will then finally become convinced of the strength of the proletariat. The peasant still has fresh memories of the landlords of Denikin and Kolchak, but he sees laziness and idleness and says "It would perhaps be a good thing, but it is not for the likes of us."

The peasants must be allowed to see something else. Let the working class organise production as it organised the Red Army. Let every worker become imbued with the consciousness that he is ruling the country. The fewer we are, the greater the demands made on us. Russia must be transformed into a vast army of labour heroically conscious that everything must be sacrificed for the common cause—the emancipation of the toilers.

You all know that the textile industry is in a state of extreme disorganisation because there is now no cotton—which has to be imported—owing to the fact that Western Europe is now suffering from an acute shortage of raw materials. The only source of supply is Turkestan, which was only recently conquered from the White Guards, but the transport system is not yet functioning properly.

One means of salvation at the present time is to extract and prepare peat as quickly as possible, which will enable us to start all the electric power stations at their full capacity and to emancipate ourselves from our utter dependence on coal regions remote from Central Russia.

To rely on wood fuel in the present state of disorganisation is out of the question. The peat bogs are mainly situated in the textile regions. And it is one of the chief duties of the textile proletariat to organise the extraction of peat. I know that this is extremely arduous work: you have to stand up to your knees in water, at a time when there are neither boots nor houses. The difficulties are immense. But did the Red Army have everything it needed? How many sacrifices, how many hardships were borne by the Red Army men when for two months they marched, up to their waists in water, and captured the tanks from the British? The capitalists are hoping that the workers are exhausted and starving and will not be able to hold on. The capitalists are lying in wait for the government of the workers, and their whole hope is that the proletariat, being unable to cope with the task of creating a united labour front, will re-install them in power.

I am very far from believing that the work that faces us is easy, but all difficulties must and can be overcome. Every worker must help to organise labour, so that the peasant may see that he is an

organiser, work must be regarded as the only means of preserving the workers' and peasants' government. When under Kerensky the manufacturers already realised that they would not be able to regain the factories, they damaged production, concluded agreements with the capitalists of other countries for the destruction of Russian industry, only not to surrender it to the workers. They endeavoured to exhaust the proletariat by civil war.

The working class is facing a most tremendous trial, and every working man and every working woman must perform even greater miracles than the Red Army men performed at the front. Self-sacrifice under conditions of drab workaday life is immeasurably more difficult but a hundred times more valuable than sacrificing one's life.

Down with the old isolation! Only the worker who has distinguished himself as a member of the Red army of labour is worthy of being a trade union member. Even though hundreds of mistakes are committed, even though thousands of defeats are suffered, we shall not be daunted. We must realise that only the steadfast onslaught of the proletariat can secure victory.

The proletariat has been defending the workers' and peasants' government for two years. The social revolution is ripening all over the world. In order to prove that we can cope with the task laid upon us, we must energetically and with complete assurance, however difficult the situation may be, preserve our proletarian enthusiasm and achieve such miracles on the peaceful front of labour as were achieved by the Red Army on the bloody front of the struggle against the imperialists and their henchmen.

SUBBOTNIKS *

Report Delivered at the Moscow City Conference of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks), December 20, 1919

COMRADES, as I am informed by the organisers of the conference, you have arranged for a report on the subject of subbotniks, dividing it into two parts in order to permit a detailed discussion of the main aspects of the question firstly, the organisation of subbotniks in Moscow and their results, and, secondly, the practical conclusions to be drawn for their organisation in future I should like to confine myself to general propositions, to the thoughts that are evoked by the organisation of subbotniks, as a new phenomenon in our Party and Soviet development I shall therefore dwell only very briefly on the practical aspects

When communist subbotniks were first organised, it was difficult to judge what attention this phenomenon deserved and whether anything important could come of it I remember that when the first news of this began to appear in the Party press, the comments of comrades closely associated with trade union matters and with the Commissariat of Labour were at first extremely reserved, not to say pessimistic It seemed to them that there were no grounds for attaching any great significance to the subbotniks Since that time subbotniks have become so widespread that their importance in our development cannot be disputed

And, indeed, we very frequently employ the word "Communism", so much so, in fact that we have even embodied it in the name of our Party But when one comes to think the matter over, the thought arises that together with the good that followed there from a certain danger may also have been created The chief reason which induced us to change the name of the Party was the desire to dissociate ourselves as definitely as possible from the prevalent Socialism of the Second International When during the imperial

ist was the overwhelming majority of the official parties of Socialism, in the person of their leaders, gave their support to the bourgeoisies of their countries or to their governments, the extreme crisis the collapse of the old Socialism, became clear to us. And it was chiefly in order to make it absolutely clear that we cannot regard those who during the imperialist war sided with their governments as Socialists, in order to show that the old Socialism had decayed and died, that the idea of changing the name of our Party was advanced. All the more was this necessary because the term "Social Democracy" had long ago become a misnomer from the purely theoretical point of view. As early as the 'forties, when it first began to be widely adopted politically, it was appropriated in France by the party of petty bourgeois Socialist reformism and not by the party of the revolutionary proletariat. Thus the prime reason and motive for changing the name of the Party and giving it a name which has become the name of a new International was the desire to dissociate ourselves in the most positive way from the old Socialism.

If we were to ask ourselves in what way communism differs from socialism, we would have to reply that socialism is the society which grows directly out of capitalism, that it is the first form of the new society. Communism, on the other hand, is a higher form of society, which can develop only when socialism has taken firm hold. Socialism implies the performance of work without the aid of capitalists, it implies social labour accompanied by the strictest accounting, control and supervision on the part of the organised vanguard the most advanced section of the toilers. Moreover, it implies that standards of labour and the amount of compensation for labour must be determined. They must be determined because capitalist society has left us such relics and habits as uncoordinated labour, lack of confidence in social economy, the old habits of the small producer, which prevail in all peasant countries. All these run counter to a real communist economy. Communism, on the other hand, is the name we apply to a system under which people become accustomed to the performance of public duties without any specific machinery of compulsion, when unpaid work for the common good becomes the general phenomenon. It goes without

saying that for those who are taking the first steps towards a complete victory over capitalism the concept 'communism is far too remote. Hence, however right the change of name of our Party may have been, however vast the benefits it may have brought, however great the task that has been performed, and however widespread its effects—for there are now Communist Parties all over the world, and although a year has not yet elapsed since the foundation of the Communist International,¹ it is far stronger in the working class movement than the old, moribund Second International—nevertheless, to construe the name "Communist Party" as meaning that a communist system is now being established would lead to a serious distortion of the facts, would cause practical harm, would be sheer boastfulness.

That is why one must be extremely careful in the use of the word "communist," and that is why the communist subbotniks, when they began to be generally practised, acquired such value, for it was only in this extremely small phenomenon that some thing communistic began to manifest itself. What we obtained from the expropriation of the landlords and capitalists was only the possibility of building up the initial forms of socialism, but there is nothing communistic in that yet. If we examine our present economic system we shall discern only the very feeble germs of socialism amidst an overwhelming prevalence of old economic forms, as expressed either in the predominance of small scale production or in the wildest and most unrestrained profiteering. But when our enemies, the petty bourgeois "democrats, the Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries, in levelling their objections against us, say "You have smashed large scale capitalism, and in its place the worst forms of profiteering, usurious capitalism are bursting from every pore—we reply "If you imagined that we could pass directly from large scale capitalism to communism, you are not revolutionaries but reformists, or utopians.

Large scale capitalism has been thoroughly undermined every where, even in countries where not a single step towards socialism has yet been taken. And in view of this, the criticism and objections

¹ The First Congress of the Third International, or Communist International, was held in Moscow, March 26, 1919.—Ed

that our enemies level against us are absolutely baseless. Of course, when large scale capitalism is smashed, the shoots of a new, small scale, profiteering, capitalism begin to appear in its place. We are now in the throes of a savage fight against the relics of large scale capitalism, which has seized on every opportunity for small scale profiteering, where it cannot so easily be caught, and where it resorts to the most pernicious and unorganised forms of trade.

The struggle, which became far more bitter under the conditions of war, evoked most brutal forms of profiteering, particularly where capitalism was organised on a larger scale. And it would be absolutely false to picture the revolutionary transition in any other way. Such is the state of our present economy. If we were to ask what the present economic system in Soviet Russia is, we should have to say that it is a process in which the foundations of socialism are being laid in large scale production, that it is the remoulding of the old capitalist economic system in face of the stubborn resistance of capitalism manifested in an immense variety of forms. The countries of Western Europe that have suffered in the war to the same degree as ours, as, for example, Austria, differ from us only in the fact that this disintegration of capitalism, this profiteering, manifests itself much more strongly, while the germs of socialist development, of that which puts up a resistance to capitalism, do not exist. But there is still nothing communistic in our economic system. "Communist" features begin only with the appearance of subbotniks, that is, the unpaid work of individual persons, unregulated by any government or state, performed on a wide scale for the public good. This is not help rendered to a neighbour, such as was always practised in the countryside, this is labour to satisfy a general need of the state organised on a wide scale, and unpaid. It would therefore be more correct to apply the word communist not only to the name of the Party, but also and exclusively, to such economic phenomena in our social life as are "communist" in fact. If there is anything communistic in our present system in Russia it is the subbotniks, and only the subbotniks, everything else is but a fight against capitalism for the consolidation of socialism from which, after its complete triumph,

should grow that communism which we observe in the subbotniks, *not as a theoretical thing but as an actual fact*

This is the fundamental significance of the subbotniks, which have shown that something has been created and is beginning to spring up in the form of unpaid labour widely organised on behalf of the state as a whole, *something absolutely new, which runs counter to all the old capitalist rules, something superior to the socialist society which is triumphing over capitalism* And therefore when this year the call of the Central Committee of the Party to come to the help of the country was answered first by the railwaymen of the Moscow-Kazan Railway, who are living in the greatest hunger and want, and when signs began to be observed that the communist subbotniks were ceasing to be isolated phenomena, were beginning to spread and were meeting with the sympathy of the masses, it became possible to say that here was a phenomenon of vast and fundamental significance and that we must support it in every way if we desire to be Communists not merely in principle and not merely in the sense that we are combating capitalism From the point of view of the practical construction of a socialist society, this is not enough It must be said that this movement can be made to assume mass proportions Whether we have already proved this I do not undertake to say, because no general summaries have yet been made showing what proportions have been reached by the movement we call communist subbotniks All I have is isolated data and what I have read in the Party press, which show that these subbotniks are becoming increasingly widespread in a number of cities The Petrograd comrades say that the subbotniks in Petrograd are incomparably more widespread than in Moscow As regards the provinces, many comrades practically acquainted with this movement have told me that a vast amount of material is being collected by them on this new form of social labour But it will be only after this subject has again and again been discussed in the press and at the Party conferences of the various cities that we shall be able to obtain general data permitting us to say whether the subbotniks have become a mass phenomenon and whether we have really achieved important successes in this field

However that may be, whether we shall receive complete and reliable data soon or not, there can be no doubt that, from the point of view of principle, we observe no phenomenon other than the subbotniks that would indicate that not only do we call ourselves Communists, not only do we desire to be Communists, but that we are already accomplishing something that in practice is not only socialist, but communist. And therefore every Communist, everyone who desires to remain true to the principles of communism, must devote all his energies and attention to assisting the study of this phenomenon and its practical application. This is the fundamental significance of the subbotniks. And, therefore, this question must be constantly raised at every Party conference and discussed from the point of view of both theory and practice. We must not confine this phenomenon to its theoretical aspect, to the question of principle. Communist subbotniks are of tremendous value to us not only because they are a realisation of communism in practice. Apart from this, subbotniks have a double significance for us: they are significant from the point of view of the state, of the purely practical assistance given to the state; they are also significant from the point of view of the Party, a significance which for us, as Party members, should not be left in the shade—it is their significance as a means of purging the Party of alien elements, of combating the influences to which the Party is being subjected in an environment of disintegrating capitalism.

FROM THE FIRST SUBBOTNIK ON THE MOSCOW KAZAN
RAILWAY TO THE ALL-RUSSIAN
MAY DAY SUBBOTNIK *

THE stretch indicated in the title was traversed in a single year. It is a tremendous stretch. However feeble our subbotniks still are, however great may be the innumerable defects betrayed in every subbotnik from the standpoint of co-ordination, organisation and discipline, the main thing has nevertheless been accomplished. The cumbersome machine has been set going, and that is the crux of the matter. We cherish no illusions as to how little has yet been done and what an infinite amount still remains to be done. But only the wretched enemies of the toilers, the malicious supporters of the bourgeoisie, are capable of disparaging the May Day subbotnik, only the most contemptible people, who have sold themselves to capitalism body and soul, can condemn the fact that the great May Day holiday has been utilised for a mass attempt to introduce communist labour.

It is only after the overthrow of tsars, landlords and capitalists that the field is first cleared for the real construction of socialism, for the creation of a new social tie, of a new discipline of common labour and of a new historic system for the national, and then the international economy. This is a matter of remoulding habits and customs, which have long been polluted and perverted by accursed private property in the means of production and by the atmosphere of enmity and mistrust, of hostility, disunion and mutual intrigue that accompanies it, and that inevitably disappears and is constantly reproduced by small scale individual production, production by property owners and free exchange between them.

For centuries, free trade, the free exchange of commodities, has been a maxim of great economic wisdom for millions of people and a firmly ingrained habit of hundreds of millions of people.

This freedom is as utterly false and as much a screen for capitalist deceit, violence and exploitation as the other liberties and rights proclaimed and practised by the bourgeoisie, such as the right to work (for which read *the right to die of starvation*), and so forth. All these rights were created by the property owners. We have irrevocably abolished and are unmercifully combating this right of capital to exploit labour. Away with the old social ties, the old economic relations, the old rights of labour subjected to capital, the old laws, the old habits. We shall build a new society. We were not daunted by defeat in the great revolutionary war against tsarism, against the bourgeoisie and against the all powerful imperialist powers. We are not daunted by the tremendous difficulties and the mistakes that are inevitable at the commencement of a difficult cause—for the work of remoulding all labour habits and customs is a work of decades. And we solemnly and firmly promise each other that we shall be prepared for every sacrifice, that we shall remain steadfast and resolute in this most difficult fight, the fight against the force of habit, and that we shall work for years and decades without sparing ourselves.

We shall work for the eradication of that accursed law "every man for himself and the devil take the hindmost," for the eradication of the habit of regarding labour only as a thing of compulsion and justified only when paid in accordance with certain labour standards. We shall work to inculcate in people the habit to implant in the everyday life of the masses the law "all for one and one for all," "from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs," to introduce, gradually but undeviatingly, communist discipline in communist toil. We have dislodged a rock of tremendous weight, the rock of inertia, ignorance and stubborn adherence to the habit of free trade, the free purchase and sale of labour power and human power like any other commodity. We have begun to loosen and to destroy the most ingrained prejudices, the most ancient and deep rooted habits. In one year, our subbotniks have made tremendous progress. They are still infinitely weak. But that does not daunt us. We have seen how, under our very eyes and as the result of our efforts, the infinitely weak Soviet government has grown in strength and has begun to be

transformed into a mighty world force We shall strive for years and decades to apply subbotniks, develop them extend them, improve them, and implant them in the habits of the people We shall achieve the success of communist labour

May 2, 1920

THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL OF PEOPLE'S COMMISSARS

*Report Delivered at the Eighth All Russian Congress
of Soviets, December 22, 1920 **

COMRADES, I have to make the report on the home and foreign policy of the government. I do not conceive the purpose of my report to be to give you a list of the most consequential or important acts and measures of the workers' and peasants' government. Nor do I think that you would be interested or that there would be any essential significance in an account of the events of this period. It seems to me that what is necessary is to draw general conclusions from the principal lessons we have learnt during this year, which was no less fertile in abrupt political changes than the preceding years of the revolution, and to deduce from the general lessons of the experience of this year the most urgent political and economic tasks that face us, tasks to which the Soviet government—both through the legislative acts which are being submitted for your examination and endorsement and through the sum total of its measures—at present attaches the greatest hopes and significance, and from the fulfilment of which it expects important successes in the matter of our economic development. Permit me, therefore, to confine myself to brief comments on the foreign situation of the republic and on the chief results obtained in the sphere of foreign policy during the past year.

You all know, of course, how the Polish landlords and capitalists forced a war on us under the pressure and insistence of the capitalist countries of Western Europe—and not of Western Europe alone. You know that in April of this year we made proposals of peace to the Polish government on terms which were incomparably more advantageous for it than the present terms and that it was only under pressure of dire necessity after our negotiations for an armistice with Poland had ended in utter failure, that we were

obliged to resort to war, a war which, in spite of the heavy defeat suffered by our forces near Warsaw as a result of the undoubted over exhaustion from which they were suffering because of the war, ended in a peace that is for us far more favourable than the one we proposed to Poland in April. A preliminary peace with Poland has been signed, and negotiations are now under way for the conclusion of a final peace.¹ We cherish no illusions as to the danger arising from the pressure exerted by some of the more stubborn capitalist countries and from the pressure exerted by certain Russian White Guard circles in order to prevent these negotiations from leading to peace. But it must be said that the policy of the Entente, which aims at military intervention and the suppression of the Soviet government by military means, is steadily collapsing and that we are winning over to our peace policy a steadily increasing number of states which are undoubtedly hostile towards the Soviet government. The number of states that have signed peace treaties is increasing, and there is every probability that a final peace treaty with Poland will be signed in the immediate future. And thus another severe blow will be struck at the alliance of the capitalist forces which are trying to wrench the power of government from our hands by military means.

Comrades, you, of course, also know that the temporary failures we suffered in the war with Poland and the straitened position we found ourselves in at certain moments of the war were due to the fact that we were obliged to fight Wrangel, who was officially recognised by one imperialist power and who received vast material resources and military and other forms of assistance. And in order to end the war as quickly as possible, we were obliged to effect a rapid concentration of troops in order to strike a decisive blow at Wrangel. You of course know what extraordinary heroism was displayed by the Red Army in overcoming obstacles and fortifications which even military experts and military authorities considered impregnable. One of the most brilliant pages in the history of the Red Army is the complete, vigorous and remarkably swift victory secured over Wrangel.* And thus the war which was forced on us by the White Guards and imperialists was liquidated.

¹ See note to p. 85 *—/d

We can now with far greater assurance and determination set about a task that is dear to us, an essential task, one that has long been attracting us, the task of economic development. We can do so with the assurance that the capitalist bosses will not find it as easy to frustrate this work as formerly. But, of course, we must be on our guard. We cannot say that we are already guaranteed against war. And the inadequacy of the guarantee does not consist in the fact that we still have no formal peace treaties. We are very well aware that the remnants of Wrangel's army have not been destroyed, that they are lying low not very far off, and that they are under the watch and ward and are being reformed with the aid of the capitalist powers, we know that the White Guard Russian organisations are working actively in an endeavour to recreate certain military units and together with the forces possessed by Wrangel, to prepare them for a new onslaught on Russia at a favourable moment.

That is why our military preparedness must be retained at all costs. We cannot rely on the blows already struck at imperialism, and must preserve our Red Army in a state of military preparedness at all costs and increase its fighting capacity. The release of a certain section of the army and its rapid demobilisation does not, of course militate against this. We rely on the fact that the tremendous experience gained by the Red Army and its leaders during the war will now enable us to improve its quality. And we shall see to it that although the army is reduced we shall retain a basic nucleus, the maintenance of which will not entail an undue burden on the republic, and yet at the same time, although the numerical strength of the army will be reduced, we shall be in a better position than before in case of need to mobilise and equip a still larger military force.

And we are convinced that all the neighbouring states which have suffered great losses owing to the support they gave to the White Guard conspiracies hatched against us, have drawn the undeniable lesson of experience and have properly appreciated our conciliatory spirit, which was generally construed as weakness. After three years of experience, they must have convinced themselves that although we exhibit persistent peaceful intentions we

are at the same time prepared from the military point of view. And every attempt to start war on us will mean for the states resorting to war that the terms they will get after and as a result of the war will be worse than those they could have got without war or before war. This has been proved in the case of several states. And this is an achievement of ours, which we shall not surrender and which not a single one of the powers surrounding us, or in political contact with Russia, will forget. And thanks to this our relations with neighbouring states are steadily improving. You know that peace has been finally concluded with a number of states bordering on the Western frontiers of Russia, which were part of the former Russian Empire and which received from the Soviet government an unequivocal recognition of their independence and sovereignty in conformity with the fundamental principles of our policy.¹ Peace on such a basis has every chance of being far more durable than the capitalists and certain of the West European states would like.

In relation to the Latvian government I must say that at one time there was a danger of our relations becoming strained, so much so that the thought even arose of severing diplomatic relations. But the latest report from our representative in Latvia indicates that a change of policy has already taken place, and that many misunderstandings and legitimate causes of discontent have been removed. There is a strong hope that in the near future we shall be enjoying close economic relations with Latvia, which will naturally be even more useful to us in our trade with Western Europe than Esthonia and the other states bordering on the R S F S R.

I must also say, comrades, that during this year our policy in the East has been very successful. We must welcome the formation and consolidation of the Soviet Republics of Bokhara, Azerbaijan and Armenia, which have not only recovered their complete independence, but have placed the power of government in the hands of the workers and peasants. These republics are proof and corroboration of the fact that the ideas and principles of Soviet government are accessible to and immediately realisable not only by

¹ See note to p. 84 *—*Fd*

countries industrially developed, and not only with such a social support as the proletariat, but also with such a foundation as the peasantry. The idea of peasant Soviets has triumphed. The power of the peasants is secure: they have the land and the means of production. Friendly relations between the peasant Soviet Republics and the Russian Socialist Republic have already been consolidated by the practical results of our policy.

We must also welcome the forthcoming conclusion of a treaty with Persia, friendly relations with which are guaranteed by the fact that the fundamental interests of all peoples suffering from the yoke of imperialism coincide.

We must also state that friendly relations with Afghanistan, and still more so with Turkey, are being steadily established and strengthened. In relation to the latter power, the countries of the Entente have done everything they could to render normal relations between Turkey and the West European countries impossible. This circumstance, taken in conjunction with the consolidation of the Soviet government, is steadily resulting in the fact that in spite of the resistance and intrigues of the bourgeoisie, in spite of the fact that Russia is still surrounded by bourgeois countries, the alliance and friendly relations between Russia and the oppressed nations of the East are becoming firmer, for the chief fact in politics is the coercion exercised by the imperialists against the peoples which did not have the good fortune to rank among the victors, and this world policy of imperialism is leading to the establishment of closer relations, alliance and friendship among all the oppressed nations. And the success we have achieved in this respect in the West also, in relation to states which are more Europeanised than we are, goes to show that the present principles of our foreign policy are right and that the improvement of our international position rests on a firm basis. We are convinced that by continuing our peaceable policy and by making concessions (and we must make concessions if we wish to avoid war) in spite of all the intrigues and machinations of the imperialists, which of course are always capable of provoking a quarrel between us and some other state, the basic line of our policy and the fundamental interests resulting from the very nature of imperialist policy will come

into their own and will increasingly compel the establishment of closer ties between the RSFSR and a growing number of neighbouring states. And this is a guarantee that we shall be able to devote ourselves wholeheartedly to the cause of economic development and that we shall be able for a long time to work calmly, steadfastly and confidently.

I must also state that negotiations for the conclusion of a trade agreement with Great Britain are now under way. Unfortunately, these negotiations are dragging out much longer than we would wish, but we are absolutely not to blame for this. Even in July, when, at the moment of greatest success of the Soviet troops, the British government officially submitted to us the text of an agreement which would ensure the possibility of establishing trade relations, we signified our complete consent. But since that time obstacles have arisen owing to the conflict of currents within the British government and the British state. We see how the British government is vacillating, threatening to sever relations with us completely and immediately despatch warships to St. Petersburg. We have seen all this, but at the same time we have seen that in reply to this threat Councils of Action sprang up all over Great Britain*. We have seen how under the pressure of the workers the most extreme adherents of the opportunist trend and their leaders were obliged to resort to this absolutely "unconstitutional" policy, a policy which they themselves had condemned a little while before. It appears that in spite of the Menshevik prejudices which have hitherto prevailed in the British trade union movement, the pressure of the toiling masses has become strong enough to blunt the edge of the military policy of the imperialists. And now, continuing our policy of peace, we adhere to the position of the July draft proposed by the British government**. We are prepared to sign a trade agreement immediately, and if it is still unsigned the blame lies exclusively with the currents and tendencies in British ruling circles which are anxious to frustrate the trade agreement and which are anxious, against the will not only of the majority of the workers but even of the majority of the British bourgeoisie, once more to have the opportunity of attacking Soviet Russia with their hands untied. But that is their business.

The longer this policy continues among certain influential circles in Great Britain, in finance capital and imperialist circles, the more it will aggravate the financial situation, the longer it will delay the semi agreement which has now become essential between bourgeois Britain and the Soviet Republic, and the nearer it will bring the imperialists to a position in which they will be obliged to accept a full agreement, and not merely a semi agreement

Comrades, I must say that this trade agreement with Great Britain is connected with a question which is one of the most important in our economic policy—the question of concessions. One of the important acts passed by the Soviet government during the period under review is the law on concessions of November 23, 1920¹. Of course, you are all acquainted with the text of this law. You all know that we have now published supplementary material, from which members of the Congress of Soviets can obtain full information on this question. We have published various pamphlets containing not only the text of this decree but also a list of the chief objects offered for concession, namely, food, timber and mining. We have taken steps to make the published text of this decree available in the West European countries as early as possible, and we hope that our concessions policy will be successful from the practical standpoint also. We in no way close our eyes to the danger which this policy involves for the Socialist Soviet Republic, for a country, moreover, that is weak and backward. As long as the Soviet Republic remains an isolated border region of the capitalist world, to hope for our complete economic independence and for the disappearance of dangers would be absolutely ridiculous, fantastic and utopian. Of course, as long as such radical contrasts remain, the dangers will also remain, and there is no escaping them. What we have to do is to establish a firm foothold, in order to survive these dangers, we must be able to distinguish between big dangers and little dangers, and incur the lesser dangers rather than the greater.

We were recently informed that at a Congress of Soviets of the Arzamas Uyezd in the Nizhni Novgorod Gubernia a peasant who

¹ See note to p. 279 *—*Ed*

is not a member of the Party said on the subject of concessions 'Comrades, we are delegating you to the all Russian congress and declare that we peasants are prepared to endure hunger and cold and to perform levies for another three years, but don't sell Mother Russia in concessions' I greet such sentiments with joy, they are very widespread I think that what is significant for us is that during these three years there has matured among the non Party masses, not only of workers but also of peasants, the political and economic experience which enables and compels them to value their liberation from the capitalists above everything else, which compels them to exercise treble caution and to treat with extreme suspicion every step which involves the possibility of new dangers in respect to the restoration of capitalism There can be no question but that we listen with the greatest attention to all such declarations, but we must say that there is no question of selling Russia to the capitalists It is a question of concessions, and every concessionary agreement is limited to a definite period and by definite terms, and is hedged around by every possible guarantee, guarantees that have been carefully considered and will again be considered and discussed with you at the present congress and at all other conferences And these temporary agreements have no resemblance to a sale They bear no resemblance to a sale of Russia What they do represent is a certain economic concession to the capitalists, the purpose of which is to enable us as soon as possible to secure those necessary machines and locomotives without which we cannot effect the restoration of our economic life We have no right to scorn anything that may, in however small a way, facilitate an improvement in the condition of the workers and peasants

We must do the maximum possible to bring about the rapid restoration of trade relations And at present these negotiations are being carried on in a semi legal way We are ordering locomotives and machines in far from adequate quantities, but we have begun to order them If we conduct these negotiations legally, these possibilities will be vastly extended With the aid of industry we shall achieve a great deal, and in a shorter time, but no matter how great this success may be, this period will be measured in years, a number of years It must be borne in mind that although we have

now gained a military victory and have secured peace, history, on the other hand, teaches us that not a single big question has been settled and not a single revolution accomplished without a series of wars. And we shall not forget this lesson. We have already taught a number of mighty powers not to wage war on us, but we cannot guarantee that it will be for long. We must be prepared for the fact that with the slightest change in the situation the imperialist pirates will again move against us. We must be prepared for this. Hence, the first thing is to restore our economic life and to place it firmly on its feet. Without equipment, without machines obtained from capitalist countries, this cannot be accomplished rapidly. And we should not grudge the capitalists a little extra profit if only we secure this restoration. The workers and peasants must share the sentiments of those non-Party peasants who have declared that they do not fear sacrifices and privations. Realising the danger of capitalist intervention, they do not regard concessions from a sentimental point of view, but as a continuation of the war, the transfer of the ruthless struggle to another plane, they discern in them the possibility of fresh attempts on the part of the bourgeoisie to restore the old capitalism. This is excellent, it is a guarantee that not only the organs of Soviet power but every worker and peasant will make it his business to keep watch and ward over our interests. And in that case, we are assured, we shall be able, even while carrying out the concessionary agreements, to place the protection of our interests on such a basis that there will be no question of a restoration of the power of the capitalists. And we shall achieve a state of affairs in which this danger will be reduced to a minimum, in which it will be less than the danger of war, in which the resumption of war will be difficult and it will be easier for us to revive and develop our economic life in a shorter period, in fewer years (and it is a matter of a fairly large number of years).

Comrades, economic tasks and the economic front are again and again assuming prominence as the chief and fundamental thing. Examining the legislative material on which I have to report to you, I became convinced that the vast majority of the measures and decisions of the Council of People's Commissars and

the Council of Defence * consist at present of partial, detailed and frequently quite trifling measures dealing with economic activity. You, of course, do not expect me to give you a list of these measures. That would be extremely tedious and absolutely uninteresting. I should only like to remind you that this is by no means the first time that we are attaching prime importance to the labour front. Let us recall the resolution passed by the All Russian Central Executive Committee on April 29, 1918. This was at the time when the Brest Peace, which was forced on us, dismembered Russia economically. Thus inordinately piratical treaty placed us in an extremely difficult position. It then appeared possible to count on a respite which would create conditions for the restoration of peaceful economic activities, and—although we now know that this respite was a very brief one—the All Russian Central Executive Committee, in its resolution of April 29, transferred all its attention to economic development. This resolution, which has not been rescinded and remains one of our laws, gives a proper perspective, enabling us to judge how we approached this task and to what we must now devote greater attention in the interests of our work and in order to complete it successfully.

Upon examining this resolution it becomes clear that many of the problems we shall now have to tackle were presented in a definite, resolute and sufficiently decisive way in April 1918. Remembering this, we say that repetition is the mother of learning. We are not dismayed by the fact that we are now repeating the basic truths of economic development. We shall repeat them many times yet. But just note what difference there is between the proclamation of abstract principles which was made in 1918 and the economic work which has already been begun practically. And in spite of the tremendous difficulties and the constant interruptions in our work, we are approaching more and more closely to a practical presentation of the economic problem. We shall repeat ourselves over and over again. In constructive work you cannot avoid a vast number of repetitions, you cannot avoid turning back every now and again, you cannot avoid testing what you have done, making certain corrections, adopting new methods, bending every effort to convince the backward and untrained

The essential fact in the political situation at the present moment is that we are passing through a crucial, transitional period, a certain zigzag, a period in which we are passing from war to economic development. This has occurred before, but not on such a broad scale. This should serve constantly to remind us what the general political tasks of the Soviet government are and what constitutes the peculiarity of this period. The dictatorship of the proletariat was successful because it knew how to combine compulsion with persuasion. The dictatorship of the proletariat does not fear to resort to compulsion, and to the most severe, decisive and ruthless expression of state compulsion, for the advanced class, which was the class most oppressed by capitalism, is entitled to resort to compulsion, because it is doing so in the interests of the toilers and exploited, and because it possesses means of compulsion and persuasion such as were not possessed by any of the former classes, although they had incomparably greater material opportunities for propaganda and agitation than we.

If we ask ourselves what the results of our experience in these three years are (for it is difficult on certain basic points to sum up the results of only one year), if we ask ourselves what, after all, explains our victory over the enemy, who was much stronger than we were, it must be said that it was because the organisation of the Red Army was a magnificent embodiment of the consistency and firmness displayed by the proletarian leadership in the alliance of the workers and the toiling peasantry against all the exploiters. Why was this possible? Why did the vast masses of the peasantry willingly consent to this? Because they were convinced, although the vast majority of them were not members of the Party, that there was no way of salvation except by supporting the Soviet government. And they became convinced of this, of course, not from books and not by propaganda, but by experience. They were convinced by the experience of the civil war, in particular by the league between our Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries, which has greater kinship with certain fundamental features of small scale peasant economy. The experience of the league between these parties of the small property owners and the landlords and capitalists, and the experience of Kolchak and Denikin, con-

vinced the peasant masses that no middle course was possible, that the straight Soviet policy was the right policy and that the iron leadership of the proletariat was the only means of salvation from exploitation and coercion for the peasantry. And it was only because we were able to convince the peasants of this that our policy of compulsion, which is based on this firm and absolute conviction, enjoyed such tremendous success.

We must now bear in mind that in passing to the labour front, the same problem, under new conditions and on a much wider scale, confronts us as confronted us when we were fighting the White Guards, when we witnessed a degree of enthusiasm and concentration of energy on the part of the worker and peasant masses such as has never been and never could have been the case in any war in any other state. The non-Party peasants, like the Arzamas peasant whose words I just quoted, from their observation and their acquaintance with life, did indeed come to the conclusion that the exploiters are ruthless enemies and that a ruthless government power is required in order to crush them. And never before was such a mass of the people brought to exercise an intelligent attitude towards the war and to support it actively. Never before, under any political regime, has there been even one tenth of the sympathy with war that was unanimously displayed by our Party and by the non-Party workers and non-Party peasants (and the mass of the peasants are non-Party). This is a corroboration of one of the most profound and at the same time most simple and comprehensible precepts of Marxism. The greater the scope and extent of historical actions, the greater is the number of people who participate in these actions, and, contrariwise, the more profound is the transformation we wish to accomplish, the more must we arouse an interest and an intelligent attitude towards this transformation and the more must we convince millions and tens of millions of people that it is necessary. In the last analysis, the reason why our revolution has left all other revolutions far behind is that, through the Soviet form of government, it aroused tens of millions of people who were formerly not interested in state development to take an active part in state development.

Now let us pass from this aspect to the new tasks which con-

fronted us and which were expressed in tens and hundreds of decisions of the Soviet government during this period, which accounted for nine tenths of the work of the Council of Labour and Defence (of this we shall speak later) and probably more than half the work of the Council of People's Commissars. These are the economic tasks, namely, the creation of a single economic plan, the reorganisation of the very foundations of the economy of Russia, the very foundations of small scale peasant economy. These tasks demand that all members of the trade unions without exception should be drawn into this absolutely new work, in which they had no part under capitalism. Now ask yourselves whether we have here the condition for rapid and unequivocal success such as existed during the time of the war, the condition, namely, that the masses are drawn into the work. Are they, the members of the trade unions, the majority of whom do not belong to the Party, convinced of the necessity for our new methods, for our great tasks of economic development? Are they as convinced of this as they were of the necessity of devoting everything to the war, of sacrificing everything for the sake of victory on the war front? If the question is put in this way you will be compelled to answer undoubtedly not. They are far from being convinced of this as fully as they should be.

War was a matter which people understood and to which they had been accustomed for hundreds and thousands of years. The old acts of coercion and brutality of the landlords were so obvious that it was easy to convince people, and even the peasants of the richer grain regions, who are least connected with industry, were not difficult to convince that we were waging war in the interests of the toilers, and it was therefore possible to arouse almost universal enthusiasm. It will be much more difficult to get the peasant masses and the members of the trade unions to understand these tasks now, to get them to understand that it is impossible to live in the old way, that however firmly capitalist exploitation has been implanted in the course of decades it must be overcome. We must get everybody to understand that Russia belongs to us, and that only we, the masses of workers and peasants, can by our actions and our strict labour discipline remould the old economic

conditions of existence and put a great economic plan into practice. There can be no salvation apart from this. We are lagging behind the capitalist powers and will continue to lag behind them, we shall be defeated if we do not manage to restore our economy. That is why we must repeat the old truths of which I have just reminded you, the old truths regarding the importance of organisational problems, of labour discipline, of the immense role of the trade unions—an absolutely exclusive role in this sphere because there is no other organisation which unites the broad masses—that is why we must not only repeat these old truths, but must with every fibre of our being realise that the transition from military tasks to economic tasks has begun.

We have been completely successful in the military sphere, and we must now prepare to achieve similar success in tasks which are more difficult and which demand enthusiasm and self-sacrifice from the vast majority of workers and peasants. The conviction that the new tasks are necessary must be inculcated in hundreds of millions of people who from generation to generation have lived in a state of slavery and oppression and whose every initiative was suppressed, we must convince the millions of workers who belong to trade unions but who are politically still unenlightened and unaccustomed to regarding themselves as masters, they must be organised not to resist the government but to support and develop the measures of their workers' government and to carry them out to their full extent. This transition will be accompanied by difficulties. From the standpoint of simple formulation it is not a new task, it is a new task because for the first time the economic problem is being raised on such a vast scale, and we must realise and remember that the war on the economic front will be more difficult and prolonged. In order to achieve success on this front a larger number of workers and peasants must be got to display initiative, activity and loyalty. And this can be done, as is borne out by the experience we have gained in economic development, because the realisation of the misfortunes, cold, hunger and privation caused by the inadequacy of productive forces is deeply ingrained in the masses. We must now direct our attention to transferring our whole agitation and propaganda from political and military interests to

economic development We have proclaimed this many times, but not sufficiently, and it seems to me that among the measures taken by the Soviet government during the past year there stands out the creation of the Central Bureau of Production Propaganda of the All Russian Central Council of Trade Unions, its amalgamation with the work of the Department for Political Education and the creation of additional newspapers based on the production plan and devoting their attention not only to production propaganda but also to its organisation on a national scale *

The necessity of organising it on a national scale follows from the peculiarities of the political situation It is necessary equally for the working class, the trade unions and the peasantry It is the greatest necessity of our state apparatus which is far from being sufficiently utilised for this purpose We have a thousand times more knowledge, book knowledge, of how to conduct industry and how to interest the masses than is being applied in practice We must see to it that every member of the trade unions, without exception, should be interested in production and that he should remember that only by increasing production and by increasing the productivity of labour will Soviet Russia be able to succeed And only in this way will Soviet Russia be able to curtail by ten years the frightful conditions in which she finds herself, the hunger and cold from which she is now suffering If we do not understand these tasks we may all perish, because owing to the weakness of our apparatus we shall have to retreat, since, after they have had a certain respite, the capitalists may at any moment renew the war, while we shall not be in a condition to continue the war We shall not then be in a condition to bring the pressure of the millions of our masses to bear, and in this last war we shall be smashed And that is how the matter stands Hitherto, the fate of all revolutions, of all great revolutions, has been decided by long series of wars Our revolution is one of these great revolutions We have passed through one period of war and we must prepare for a second But we do not know when it will come and we must see to it that when it does come we shall be prepared for all eventualities It is for this reason that we must not refuse to resort to measures of compulsion and not merely for the reason that we are

preserving the dictatorship of the proletariat, which is already understood by the mass of peasants and by the non Party workers, they all know our dictatorship, and it holds out no terrors for them, it does not frighten them, they regard it as a bulwark and stronghold, that is, something with the help of which they can resist the landlords and capitalists and without which victory is impossible

This realisation, this conviction, which has already become part of the flesh and blood of the peasant masses as far as military and political tasks are concerned, must be transferred to economic problems. We may not perhaps succeed in performing this transition at once. It may possibly not be effected without certain vacillations and reversions to the old slackness of will and petty bourgeois ideology. We must tackle this work with still greater energy and zeal, remembering that we shall be able to convince the non Party peasants and inadequately class conscious trade union members, because the truth is on our side, and because it cannot be denied that in the second period of wars we shall not be able to defeat our enemies unless our economic life is restored. Let us only see to it that the millions have a more enlightened attitude towards the war on the economic front. That is the task of the Central Bureau of Production Propaganda, it is the task of the All Russian Central Council of Trade Unions, it is the task of all Party workers, it is the task of all the departments of the Soviet government, it is the task of our propaganda, with the help of which we have secured successes of world wide renown because our propaganda all over the world has always told the workers and peasants the truth, while all other propaganda is telling them lies. We must now transfer our propaganda to something which is far more difficult something which concerns the everyday work of the workers in the workshops, no matter how difficult the conditions of this work may be, and no matter how powerful may be the memories of the old capitalist system which inspired the workers and peasants with mistrust of the government. Both workers and peasants must be convinced of the fact that without a new combination of forces, without new forms of state amalgamation, and without the new forms of compulsion associated therewith, we shall not extricate

ourselves from the swamp, we shall not extricate ourselves from the abyss of economic collapse on the verge of which we are standing—and we have already begun to extricate ourselves

I shall now pass, comrades, to certain facts of our economic policy and to the economic problems which seem to me to be characteristic of the present political situation and of the transition now confronting us. I must first mention our agrarian bill, the bill of the Council of People's Commissars for consolidating and developing agricultural production and for granting assistance to peasant husbandry, the bill which was published on December 14 of this year, and regarding the basic features of which all local workers had already been informed by a special radio message dealing with the substance of this bill *

Arrangements must at once be made so that this bill should be subjected—in the light of local experience (and it is based on local experience), they have already begun to sense that in the localities—to thorough discussion by the congress and also by the representatives of the local executive committees and the departments of the executive committees. Probably not a single comrade can now be met with who doubts the necessity for specific and very energetic measures of assistance—not only in the form of encouragement but also in the form of constraint—for improving our agricultural production

We were, and remain a country of small peasants, and the transition to communism is for us far more difficult than it would be under any other conditions. In order to accomplish this transition the peasants must themselves participate in it ten times more than they participated in the war. The war could demand, and was bound to demand, a section of the adult male population. But our country, a peasant country, which is still in a state of exhaustion, must mobilise the whole male and female population of workers and peasants without exception. It is not difficult to convince us Communists, workers in the land departments, that state labour service is necessary. On this point I think there will not be even a shadow of difference in principle in the discussion of the bill of December 14, which has been submitted for your examination. We must realise another difficulty, the difficulty of convincing the

non Party peasants The peasants are not Socialists And to build our socialist plans on the assumption that they are Socialists would be to build on sand, it would mean that we do not understand our tasks and that we have not learnt during these three years to adjust our programmes and carry out our initiations in accordance with the poverty stricken and at times squalid reality by which we are surrounded We must clearly realise the problems that face us The first task is to unite the Communists working in the Land Departments, general conclusions must be drawn from their experience, we must take hold of what has been done in the localities and embody it in the legislative acts which will be passed in the centre by the government departments and by the All Russian Congress of Soviets And we hope that with your help we shall be able to do it But this is only the first step The second step is to convince the non Party peasants, precisely the non Party peasants—because they constitute the mass and because what we are in a position to do can be done only by heightening in this mass, which in itself is active and full of initiative, the realisation that this task must be tackled Peasant husbandry cannot continue in the old way While we were able to extricate ourselves from the first period of wars, we shall not extricate ourselves from the second period of wars so easily, and therefore our attention must be turned in this direction

✓ Every non Party peasant must be got to understand this undoubted truth, and we are convinced that he will understand it He has not lived through these six painful and difficult years in vain He is nothing like the pre war muzhik He has suffered severely, he has reflected much, and he has borne many political and economic hardships that have induced him to forget a good deal of the past It seems to me that he already realises that he can not live in the old way, that he must live in a different way and all our means of propaganda, all our state means, all our education and all our Party means and forces must be urgently devoted to convincing the non Party peasant, and only then will our agrarian bill—which I hope you will adopt unanimously, of course with the requisite amendments and additions—be placed on a sound basis It will become as firm as our policy is firm only when we

convince the majority of the peasants and draw them into this work, because—as Comrade Kurayev has rightly said in an article based on the experience of the Tatar Republic—the toiling middle peasant and poor peasant are the friends of the Soviet government, while the idlers are its enemies. This is the real truth, a truth in which there is nothing socialist but which is so indisputable and obvious that it will be realised at any village assembly and at any meeting of non Party peasants, and will become the conviction of the overwhelming majority of the peasant and toiling population.

Comrades, this is what I particularly want to bring home to you now that we have turned from the phase of war to economic development. In a country of small peasants our chief and basic task is to know how to resort to state compulsion in order to raise the level of peasant husbandry, beginning with measures that are absolutely essential, urgent and fully accessible and comprehensible to the peasant. And we shall be able to achieve this only when we are able to convince new millions of people who are not ready for it. We must devote all our forces to this, and see to it that the apparatus of compulsion, activated and reinforced, shall be adapted and developed for a new sweep of persuasion, and then we shall end this military campaign victoriously. A military campaign is now being undertaken against the relics of inertia, unenlightenment and mistrust that prevail among the peasant masses. We shall achieve nothing by the old methods, but we shall achieve victory by the methods of propaganda, agitation and organised influence which we have learnt and shall so bring it about that not only will decrees be adopted, institutions created and documents written—it is not enough to send orders flying all over the country—but also that by the spring the fields will be sown better than before, that a definite improvement will be achieved in the husbandry of the small peasant, let it be even the most elementary—the more cautious we are the better—but it must be achieved at all costs on a mass scale. If we properly understand the task that faces us, if we devote our whole attention to the non Party peasant, and devote to this all the skill and experience we have gained during these three years, we shall succeed. And unless we succeed, unless we achieve a practical improvement in the husbandry of the small peasant on a mass scale

there is no salvation for us Unless this basis is created, no economic development will be possible and the most grandiose plans will be valueless The comrades must remember this and must bring it home to the peasants, they must tell the non Party peasants of Arzamas, and there are about ten or fifteen million like them, that we cannot go on starving and freezing endlessly, or we shall be overthrown in the next phase of war This is a state interest, the interest of our state Whoever here betrays the least weakness, the least slackness, is an out and out criminal towards the workers' and peasants' government, he is helping the landlord and capitalist And the landlord and capitalist have their armies nearby, they are holding them in readiness to launch them against us the instant they perceive that we are weakening And there is no other way of strengthening ourselves than to improve our main bulwark—agriculture and urban industry—and it cannot be improved except by convincing the non Party peasant of this, mobilising all our forces in order to help him, and by proving in practice that we are helping him

We admit ourselves debtors of the peasant We took grain from him in return for currency notes, we took it from him on credit We must repay that debt, and we shall repay it when we have restored our industry But in order to restore it we need a surplus of agricultural products And that is why our agrarian bill is important, not only because we must secure practical results, but also because around it, as around a focal point, are grouped hundreds of decisions and legislative measures of the Soviet government

I now pass to the question of how the basis for our industrial development is being created in order that we may begin to restore the economic forces of Russia And in this connection I must first draw your attention, from among the heap of reports which you have received, or will receive in the next few days, from all the Commissariats, to one passage in the report of our Commissariat of Food Every Commissariat in the next few days will present you with heaps of figures and reports, which taken together are overwhelming in their abundance, but we must extract from them what is most essential for success, however modest it may be, what is

fundamental for the realisation of our economic plan, in order to restore our national economy and our industry. And one of these bases is the condition of our food procurements. In the booklet which has been distributed to you—the report of the Commissariat of Food for three years—you will find a table from which I shall read only the totals and even those in round figures, because reading figures, and particularly listening to figures is very difficult. These are the figures showing the total amounts of the procurements each year. From August 1, 1916, to August 1, 1917, 320,000,000 poods were procured, 50,000,000 were procured in the following year, then 100,000,000 and then 200,000,000 poods. These figures—320, 50, 100 and 200—give you the basis of the economic history of the Soviet government, of the work of the Soviet government in the economic field, they give the beginnings of the foundation which, when we have mastered it, will really enable us to begin our constructive work. Before the revolution 320,000,000 poods—that is the approximate minimum without which development is impossible. In the first year of the revolution, with only 50,000,000 poods, there was hunger, cold and poverty in a high degree, in the second year 100,000,000 poods, in the third year 200,000,000 poods. The quantity has doubled each year. According to figures I received yesterday from Svidersky, on December 15 we had 155,000,000 poods. We are beginning to stand on our feet for the first time. We shall have a fund of about 300,000,000 poods, perhaps more, and without such a fund it will be impossible to restore the industry of the country, it will be impossible to think of the revival of transport, and it will be impossible even to approach the great task of electrifying Russia. A socialist country, as a state with a workers' and peasants' government, is impossible unless by the joint efforts of the workers and peasants it can accumulate a food fund sufficient to guarantee the subsistence of the workers engaged in industry and to make it possible to send tens of thousands and hundreds of thousands of workers wherever the Soviet government deems it necessary. Without this there can be nothing but empty talk. The real basis of the economic system is a food fund. And the success achieved here is tremendous. And having achieved this success, possessing such a

fund, we can set about the restoration of our national economy. We know that these successes have been achieved at the cost of tremendous privations—hunger and lack of fodder among the peasants, which may become still more accentuated. We know that the year of drought increased the hardships and privations of the peasants to an unparalleled extent. We therefore lay prime stress on the measures of assistance contained in the bill to which I have referred. We regard this food fund as a fund for the restoration of industry, as a fund for helping the peasants. Without such a fund the state power is a nonentity. Without such a fund socialist policy is but a pious wish.

And we must remember that the production propaganda which we have firmly decided to undertake will be supplemented by a different sort of persuasion, namely, rewards in kind. One of the most important decrees and decisions of the Council of People's Commissars and the Council of Defence was the law on rewards in kind.* We were not able to pass this law immediately. If you examine the matter, you will find that ever since April there has been a long chain of decisions and resolutions, and that this law was passed only when, as the result of tremendous efforts on the part of our transport system, we were able to accumulate a food fund of 500,000 poods. Five hundred thousand poods is a very modest figure. The reports which you no doubt read in the *Izvestiya*¹ yesterday show that out of these 500,000 poods 170,000 poods have already been expended. As you see, the fund is not an inspiring one and far from adequate, nevertheless we have entered on a road along which we shall be able to advance. It is a proof that we are resorting to new methods of work and not relying on persuasion alone. It is not enough to ask the peasants and the workers to display labour discipline. We must in addition help them, we must reward those who, having suffered tremendous hardships, continue to display heroism on the labour front. We have already created a fund, but it is being utilised in a way that is far from satisfactory. We in the Council of People's Commissars

¹ The *Izvestiya* of December 21, 1920. No. 287 published official statistics, over the signature P. Popov, depicting the economic condition of the R S F S R.
—Ed

have numerous indications that in practice reward in kind frequently amounts to a simple increase of wages. A good deal still remains to be done in this respect. And in addition to conferences and supplementary projects in the centre, a very important work must be performed, work, namely, in the localities, among the masses. When the state not only persuades, but also rewards good workers by creating better living conditions for them that is a thing not difficult to understand, one does not have to be a Socialist to understand it, and here we are assured in advance of the sympathy of the non Party masses of workers and peasants. We have only to make this idea much more widely known and to organise this work in a practical way in the localities.

If we now pass to fuel, you will find in the theses of Comrade Rykov figures that show the improvement that has been achieved, not only in regard to wood fuel but also in regard to oil *. Thanks to the great enthusiasm displayed by the workers in the Azerbaijan Republic, the friendly relations we have established with them and the capable leaders provided by the Council of National Economy the oil situation is now a favourable one, and we are beginning to stand on our own feet in the matter of fuel as well. Coal from the Donets Basin is being increased from 25 000,000 poods to 50,000,000 poods a month, thanks to the work of the commission which was sent to the Donets Basin under the chairmanship of Comrade Trotsky and which adopted a decision to send responsible and experienced workers to the Donets Basin. Comrade Pyatakov has now been sent there to take charge.

We have thus adopted certain measures with regard to fuel in order to achieve success. The Donets Basin, one of the largest sources, is already under our control. In the minutes of the Council of People's Commissars and the Council of Defence decisions relating to the Donets Basin may be found. They deal with the dispatch of commissions of high standing consisting of representatives from the central government and from the local workers. We must secure an improvement in the work in the localities, and it appears to me that we can do so with the help of these commissions. You will see the results of the work of these commissions, which will also be organised by us in future.

I must say that in the matter of fuel we have achieved a very important success in the shape of the hydraulic method of extracting peat. Peat is a fuel we possess in very large quantities, but which we were unable to utilise because hitherto the work had to be performed under intolerable conditions. And this new method will enable us to overcome the fuel shortage, one of the greatest dangers on our economic front. If we stick to the old methods of working we shall not be able to get out of this impasse for many years to come. The members of our Peat Committee have helped two Russian engineers in perfecting this new invention, and they have so advanced matters that this new method is on the verge of completion. We are thus on the eve of a great revolution, which will be an important aid to us economically. It must not be forgotten that we possess vast deposits of peat. But we cannot utilise them because we cannot send people to work under such inhuman conditions. The capitalist system could send people to work under such inhuman conditions. In the capitalist state people would be driven to work there by hunger, but in the socialist state we cannot consign people to such inhuman work, and nobody will go voluntarily. The capitalist system did everything for the upper classes. It was not concerned with the lower classes.

We must introduce more machines everywhere, we must resort to machine technique as widely as possible. The extraction of peat by the hydraulic method, which has been so successfully advanced by the Supreme Council of National Economy, makes it possible to extract fuel in vast quantities and to eliminate the need for trained workers, since even untrained workers can work under this method. We have produced these machines, I would recommend the delegates to see the moving picture of the work of peat extraction which has been shown in Moscow and which can be demonstrated for the congress delegates. It will give a concrete idea of where one of the bases for victory over the fuel shortage lies. We have made the machines required for the new method, but we have made them badly. With the establishment of trade with foreign countries, with even the existing semi-legal trade relations, if we were to send our people abroad, we would be able to get these machines which have been designed by our inventors, carried

out excellently. And the number of these machines and the success gained in this field by the work of the Chief Peat Committee and the Supreme Council of National Economy will serve as a measure of all our economic achievements, for unless we overcome the fuel shortage it will be impossible to win on the economic front. Vital success in restoring the transport system will also depend on this.

Incidentally, you have already seen from the theses of Comrades Yemshanov and Trotsky that in this field we have a real plan worked out for a number of years. Order No. 1042 * was designed for a period of five years, and in five years we can restore our transport, we can reduce the number of "sick" locomotives. And, as the most difficult thing, I should like to stress the statement made in the ninth thesis to the effect that this period has already been reduced.

When big plans appear, designed for a number of years, sceptics are frequently to be found who say: "What is the good of our planning for a number of years? It will be a good thing if we can do what is required just now." Comrades, we must be able to combine the one with the other, we cannot work without a plan designed for a long period and envisaging important achievements. That this is actually so is confirmed by the undoubted improvement achieved in the work of the transport system. I draw your attention to the passage in the ninth thesis which says that the period for the restoration of transport was fixed at five years, but that it has already been reduced because we are exceeding the schedule. The period is being fixed at three and a half years **. That is the way to work in the other branches of economic activity. And it is to this that the real and practical task of the Council of Labour and Defence is being steadily reduced. We must follow the experiments of science and practical work, and we must steadfastly strive to have the plan fulfilled in the localities sooner than designated, in order that the masses may see that the long period which separates us from the complete restoration of industry can in practice be reduced. It depends on us. Let us improve our methods of work in every workshop, in every railway depot, and in every sphere, and we shall reduce this period. And it is being reduced. Do not be afraid of plans designed for a long period of

years, for without them you cannot achieve an economic revival and let us in the localities devote all our energies to their fulfilment

Economic plans must be carried out in accordance with a definite programme, and the increasing fulfilment of this programme must be noted and encouraged the masses must not only know, but also feel, that the curtailment of the period of hunger, cold and poverty entirely depends upon how quickly they fulfil our economic plans The plans of the various branches of production must be strictly co-ordinated, combined and together made to constitute that single economic plan of which we stand in such great need

In connection with this, we are confronted with the task of bringing the economic People's Commissariats under a single economic centre We have begun to tackle this task and we are submitting for your consideration a decision of the Council of People's Commissars and the Council of Labour and Defence regarding the reorganisation of the latter body

You will examine this project, and I trust that, with the necessary amendments, it will be adopted unanimously Its contents are very modest, but its significance is great, because we need a body which definitely knows what its position is and which unites all economic work, and it is on economic work that the chief stress is now being laid

In the literature which appeared before and in connection with the congress, this has been dealt with by Comrade Gussev in a pamphlet, which, by the way, is not as successful as his earlier pamphlet This pamphlet contains a grandiose plan of organisation for the Council of Labour and Defence, to which were to be transferred many prominent workers, among whom we find the names of Trotsky and Rykov I would say that we need a little less daydreaming of this kind We cannot ignore an apparatus which it has taken three years to build We realise its immense shortcomings, we shall speak of them in detail at this congress This question has been placed on the agenda, it is a most important question I am referring to the question of improving the Soviet apparatus But we must at present act with circumspection, con

fining ourselves to what is essential, and changing our apparatus on the basis of practical experience Comrade Gussev pokes fun at the project we have submitted and says that we are proposing to add the People's Commissariat of Agriculture to the Council of Labour and Defence Quite right, we are proposing such a project In the project we assign a very modest place to the Council of Labour and Defence, making it a Commission of Labour and Defence of the Council of People's Commissars Till now we have been working in the Council of Labour and Defence without a constitution The limits of competence of the Council of People's Commissars and the Council of Labour and Defence were badly defined, we sometimes exceeded these limits and acted as a legislative body But there has never been any conflict on these grounds Such cases were settled by being immediately transferred to the Council of People's Commissars When it became apparent that the Council of Labour and Defence must be converted into a body for the close co ordination of economic policy, the question arose how to define these relations in a legislative way There are two plans before us One is to define the spheres of competence of the Council of People's Commissars and the Council of Labour and Defence But in order to do this the services of numerous codifiers must be engaged and piles of documents drawn up, and in the end there will be no guarantee against mistakes being committed

Let us set about it in a different way The Council of Labour and Defence has been regarded as something almost equal to the Council of People's Commissars Let us renounce this idea Let it be a commission of the Council of People's Commissars We shall avoid a great deal of friction and shall achieve quicker practical execution If any member of the Council of People's Commissars is dissatisfied, let him bring his complaint before the Council of People's Commissars, it can be summoned in a few hours, as you know In this way we shall avoid friction between the departments and will make the Council of Labour and Defence a quick acting body This is not an easy problem It is bound up with the actual creation of a single economic plan The problem, one on which we have worked quite a lot and for which we have been preparing for two years, is to achieve co ordination of the economic Commis

sariats And that is why I draw your attention to this bill on the Council of Labour and Defence, and I hope that, with the necessary additions you will endorse it The work of uniting the economic Commissariats will then proceed more smoothly, rapidly, surely and energetically

I now come to the last point—the question of electrification, which has been made a special item on the agenda of the congress You are to hear a report on this subject It seems to me that we are here witnessing a momentous change, one which in any case is evidence of the fact that important successes are beginning to be achieved by the Soviet government It will be not only politicians and administrators who will henceforward take the rostrum at all Russian congresses, but also engineers and agronomists This marks the beginning of that very happy era when politicians will grow ever fewer in number, when people will speak of politics more rarely, and at less length, and when engineers and agronomists will do most of the talking In order really to proceed to the work of economic development this custom must be instituted at the All Russian Congress of Soviets and in all Soviets and organisations, newspapers, organs of propaganda and agitation, and all institutions, from top to bottom

There can be no question but that we have learnt politics, we cannot be misled here, here we have a basis But things are bad as far as economic matters are concerned Henceforward, the best politics will be less politics Let us have more engineers and agronomists, learn from them, keep a check on their work, make our congresses and conferences not meeting holding bodies, but bodies for testing our economic achievements, bodies in which we can really learn the business of economic development

You will hear the report of the State Electrification Commission, set up in accordance with the decision of the All Russian Soviet Executive Committee of February 7, 1920 On February 27 the Presidium of the Supreme Council of National Economy signed the final ordinance determining the composition of the commission, and a number of the finest experts and workers in the Supreme Council of National Economy, the People's Commissariat of Ways of Communication and the People's Commissariat of Agriculture,

over a hundred in all, are devoting their entire services to this work. We have before us the results of the work of the State Commission for the Electrification of Russia in the shape of this small volume which will be distributed to you today or tomorrow. I trust you will not be scared by this little volume. I think I shall have no difficulty in persuading you of the particular importance of this book. In my opinion it is a second programme of our Party. We have a Party programme which has been excellently explained by Comrades Preobrazhensky and Bukharin, in the form of a book not quite so voluminous, but extremely valuable.* That is a political programme, it is an enumeration of our tasks, it is an explanation of the relations between classes and masses. But it must also be realised that it is time to take this road in actual fact and to measure the practical results achieved. Our Party programme must not remain merely a programme of the Party. It must be converted into the programme of our economic development, otherwise it will be valueless as a programme of the Party. It must be supplemented by a second Party programme, a plan of work for restoring our entire national economy and for raising it to the level of modern technical development. Without a plan of electrification, we cannot undertake any real constructive work. When we discuss the restoration of agriculture, industry and transport, and their harmonious co-ordination, we are obliged to discuss a broad economic plan. We must adopt a definite plan, of course it will be a plan only to a first approximation. This Party programme will not be as unchangeable as our real Party programme, which can be changed only by Party congresses. No, this programme will be improved, elaborated, perfected and modified every day, in every workshop and in every volost. We need it as a first draft, which will be submitted to the whole of Russia as a great economic plan designed for a period of not less than ten years and indicating how Russia is to be placed on the real economic basis which is required for communism. When we fought and won on the war front, what was one of the most powerful impulses that served to magnify our strength and our energies tenfold? It was the realisation of danger. Everybody asked: Can the landlords and capitalists return to

Russia? And the reply was that they could. We therefore multiplied our efforts a hundredfold, and we were victorious.

Let us take the economic front and ask: Economically, can capitalism be restored in Russia? We combated "Sukharevka".¹ The other day, just prior to the opening of the All Russian Congress of Soviets, this not very pleasant institution was closed by the Moscow Soviet of Workers' and Red Army Deputies. "Sukharevka" has been closed, but it is not the "Sukharevka" which has been closed that is so sinister. The old "Sukharevka" on the Sukharev Square has been closed, and to close it was not difficult. The sinister thing is the "Sukharevka" that resides in the hearts and actions of every small master. This is the "Sukharevka" that must be closed. This "Sukharevka" is the basis of capitalism. As long as it exists, the capitalists in Russia may return and may grow stronger than we are. This must be clearly realised. This must serve as the mainspring of our work and the condition and criterion of our actual success. As long as we live in a small peasant country, there is a surer economic basis for capitalism in Russia than for communism. This must be borne in mind. Anyone who has carefully observed life in the countryside, as compared with life in the towns, knows that we have not torn up the roots of capitalism and have not undermined the foundation, the basis of the internal enemy. The latter depends on small scale production, and there is only one way of undermining it, namely, to place the economy of the country, including agriculture, on a new technical basis, the technical basis of modern large scale production. And it is only in electricity that we have such a basis.

Communism is the Soviet power plus the electrification of the whole country. Otherwise the country will remain a small peasant country, and that we must clearly realise. We are weaker than capitalism, not only on the world scale but also within the country. Everybody knows that. We have realised it, and we shall see to it that the economic basis is transformed from a small peasant basis into a large scale industrial basis. Only when the country has been

¹ See note to p. 234 *—Ed

electrified, when industry, agriculture and transport have been placed on the technical basis of modern large scale industry, only then shall we be finally victorious

We have already drawn up a preliminary plan for the electrification of the country, two hundred of our best scientific and technical men have worked on this plan. A plan has been drawn up which provides us with calculations of material and finances for a long period of years, for not less than ten years. This plan indicates how many million barrels of cement and how many million bricks we shall require for the purpose of electrification. In order to accomplish the task of electrification from the financial point of view, the calculation figures on 1,000,000,000 or 1,200,000,000 gold rubles. You know that we are a long way from being able to cover this sum with our gold fund. Our food fund is also not very large. We must therefore cover these calculations by concessions, in accordance with the plan I have mentioned. You will see the calculation and how on this basis the restoration of our industry and our transport is being planned.

Not long ago I had occasion to be present at a peasant festival in a remote corner of the Moscow Gubernia, the Volokolamsk Uyezd, where the peasants have electric light. A meeting was arranged in the street, and one of the peasants came forward and began to make a speech in which he welcomed this new event in the life of the peasants. He said, "We peasants were unenlightened, and now light has appeared among us, an unnatural light, which will light up our peasant darkness." I personally was not astonished at these words. Of course, for the non-Party peasant masses electric light is an "unnatural" light, but for us what is unnatural is that the peasants and workers could have lived for hundreds and thousands of years in such darkness, poverty and oppression under the yoke of the landlords and capitalists. You cannot emerge from this darkness very quickly. But what we must strive for at the present moment is that every electric power station we build shall actually become a stronghold of enlightenment and that it should be devoted, so to speak, to the electrical education of the masses. We have a worked out plan of electrification, but the fulfilment of this plan is designed to cover a number of years. We must fulfil this

plan at all costs, and the period of its fulfilment must be reduced. Here we must have the same thing as we had in the case of one of our first economic plans, the plan for the restoration of transport—Order No. 1042—which was designed to cover a period of five years, but which has now been reduced to three and a half years because the schedule is being exceeded.

But it must be realised and remembered that we cannot institute electrification when we have illiterates. Our commission will endeavour to put an end to illiteracy—but that is not enough. It has done a good deal compared with what existed before, but it has done little compared with what has to be done. In addition to literacy, we need cultured, enlightened and educated toilers, the majority of the peasants must definitely realise the tasks confronting us. This programme of the Party must be a basic book, which must be used in every school. You will find in it, in addition to the general plan of electrification, particular plans for every district of Russia. And every comrade, when he goes to the provinces, will have a definitely worked out scheme of electrification for his district, a scheme for transition from darkness to a normal existence. And, comrades, you can and must compare the propositions given you, elaborate them and check them on the spot, and you must see to it that in every school and in every circle, when the question "What is communism?" is replied to, the answer should not only contain what is written in the Party programme but should also state how we can emerge from our state of darkness.

Our best workers, business experts, have accomplished the task we set them of drawing up a plan for the electrification of Russia and the restoration of her economy. We must now see to it that the workers and peasants should realise how great and difficult this task is, how it must be approached and how it must be tackled.

We must see to it that every factory and every electric power station shall become a centre of enlightenment, and if Russia becomes covered by a dense network of electric power stations and powerful technical installations, our communist economic development will become a model for a future socialist Europe and Asia.

SPEECH DELIVERED AT A MEETING OF NUCLEI SECRETARIES OF THE MOSCOW ORGANISATION OF THE RUSSIAN COMMUNIST PARTY (BOLSHEVIKS)*

November 26, 1920

COMRADES, I have noticed with great pleasure, although, I must confess, with surprise, that the question of concessions is arousing enormous interest. Cries are heard on every hand, and chiefly among the rank and file. How is that, they ask—we have driven out our own exploiters, but are inviting foreign exploiters?

Why these outcries give me pleasure will be understood. Obviously, the fact that among the rank and file a cry of alarm has gone up that the old capitalists may return, that this cry has gone up in connection with an act of such tenth rate significance as the decree on concessions, is a sign that the realisation of how dangerous capitalism is and how great the danger of the struggle against it is still very, very powerful. That is excellent, of course, and all the more excellent because, as I already said, the alarm is being expressed by the rank and file.

The fundamental thing in the matter of concessions, from the standpoint of political considerations—and both political and economic considerations are involved here—the fundamental thing in the matter of concessions, from the standpoint of political considerations, is the rule which we have not only mastered theoretically but have also applied practically, and which will, until socialism finally triumphs all over the world, remain a fundamental rule with us, namely, that we must take advantage of the antagonisms and contradictions between two capitalisms, between two systems of capitalist states, inciting one against the other. As long as we have not conquered the whole world, as long as, from the economic and military standpoint, we are weaker than the capitalist world, we must adhere to the rule that we must know how to take advantage

of the antagonisms and contradictions existing among the imperialists. Had we not adhered to this rule, every one of us would have long ago been hanging from an aspen tree, to the satisfaction of the capitalists. We gained our chief experience in this respect when we concluded the Brest Treaty. It must not be inferred that all treaties must be like the Brest Treaty or the Versailles Treaty. That is not so. There may be a third kind of treaty, one favourable for us.

Brest was notable for the fact that we were able for the first time, on an immense scale and amidst vast difficulties, to take advantage of the contradictions among the imperialists in such a way that in the long run socialism won. At the time of Brest there were two gigantically powerful groups of imperialist pirates: the German-Austrian group and the Anglo-Franco-American group. They were engaged in a furious struggle which was to decide the fate of the world for the immediate future. The fact that we were able to hold on, although from the military standpoint we were a nonentity, possessing nothing and steadily sinking into the depths of chaos economically, the fact that we were able to hold on, this miracle, was entirely due to the fact that we took proper advantage of the hostility between German and American imperialism. We made a tremendous concession to German imperialism, and by making a concession to one imperialism we at once safeguarded ourselves against the persecution of both imperialisms. Germany was unable to devote herself to stifling Soviet Russia economically or politically, her hands were too full for that. We left the Ukraine to her, from which you can get as much grain and coal as you like, that is, of course, if you are able to get them, if you possess the living force with which to get them. Anglo-Franco-American imperialism was unable to attack us because we first of all refused it peace. In America, a thick book has just appeared by Robins, who relates that they had conversations with Lenin and Trotsky and secured their consent to the conclusion of peace.* Although they were helping the Czechoslovakians and were dragging them into taking part in the intervention, they were unable to interfere because they were engaged in their own war.

It may appear that the result was something like a *bloc* between the first socialist republic and German imperialism against another

imperialism But we concluded no *bloc* of any kind, we nowhere overstepped bounds, undermining or defaming the socialist power, but we took advantage of the hostility between the two imperialisms in such a way that in the long run both lost Germany got nothing from the Brest Peace except several million poods of grain, but brought Bolshevik disintegration into Germany But we gained time, in the course of which the Red Army began to be formed Even the tremendous misfortunes suffered by the Ukraine proved to be curable, although at a heavy and painful price That on which our antagonists counted, the rapid collapse of the Soviet power in Russia, did not eventuate It was just this period, which history accorded us as a breathing space, that we took advantage of in order so to consolidate ourselves that it became impossible to defeat us by military force We gained time, we gained a little time, and only sacrificed a great deal of space for it At that time, I recall, people philosophised and said that in order to gain time we must surrender space It was in accordance with the theory of time and space of the philosophers that we acted in practice and policy we sacrificed a great deal of space, but won time sufficient to enable us to gain strength After this, when all the imperialists wanted to wage a big war against us, it proved impossible They had neither the means nor the forces for a big war At that time we did not sacrifice any fundamental interests we sacrificed subsidiary interests and preserved the fundamental interests

Here, incidentally, there arises the question of opportunism Opportunism means sacrificing fundamental interests in order to gain temporary and partial advantages That is the essence of the matter from the standpoint of a theoretical definition of opportunism Many people went astray here And in the case of the Brest Peace we in fact sacrificed what were subsidiary, from the standpoint of socialism, interests of Russia as understood in the patriotic sense We made tremendous sacrifices, but they were subsidiary sacrifices The Germans hated England with all their heart and soul They also hated the Bolsheviks But we tempted them, and they fell into the trap They had all the time asserted that they would not go as far as Napoleon And, indeed they did not go as far as Moscow, but they went into the Ukraine, and there they came

to grief. They thought they had learnt a lot from Napoleon, but it turned out otherwise in fact. We, on the other hand, gained a great deal.

The example of the Brest Peace has taught us a lot. We are at present between two foes. If we are unable to defeat them both, we must know how to dispose our forces in such a way that they fall out among themselves, because, as is always the case, when thieves fall out, honest men come into their own. But as soon as we are strong enough to defeat capitalism as a whole, we shall immediately take it by the scruff of the neck. Our strength is growing, and very rapidly. While the Brest Peace was a lesson we shall never forget, one which, in respect to the inferences to be drawn from it, was richer than any propaganda or preaching, now, however, we have won, in the sense that we are standing on our own feet. We are surrounded by imperialist states, which detest the Bolsheviks with all their heart and soul, which are spending vast sums of money, ideological forces, the forces of the press, and so on, and which yet were unable in three years to defeat us in war, although we are, from the military and economic standpoint, infinitely weak. We have not one hundredth of the forces of the combined imperialist states, and yet they are unable to stifle us. They cannot stifle us because their soldiers will not obey, their workers and peasants, fatigued by the war, do not want a war against the Soviet Republic. Such is the position now, and on this position we must base ourselves. What it will be several years hence we do not know, since every year the Western powers are recuperating from the war.

Since the Second Congress of the Third International¹ we have secured a firm foothold in the imperialist countries, not only ideologically but also organisationally. There are now nuclei in all countries which are carrying on and will continue to carry on independent work. This job has been done. But the rate, the tempo of development of the revolution in the capitalist countries is far slower than with us. It was obvious that when the people secured peace, the revolutionary movement would inevitably slow down.

¹ The Second Congress of the Third International was held in Moscow, from July 19 to August 6, 1920.—Ed

Therefore without prophesying as to the future, we cannot now rely on this tempo becoming more rapid. Our task is to decide what we are to do at the present time. People live in states, and every state belongs to a system of states, which are, in relation to each other, in a certain system of political equilibrium.

If we bear in mind that all over the world the capitalists have purchased the majority of the richest sources of raw materials, or, if they have not purchased them, have seized them politically, this fact must be reckoned with and we must know how to utilise it. We cannot wage war against the present day Entente. Our agitation has been carried on and is being carried on excellently—of that we are certain. Politically, we must take advantage of the differences between our opponents, which are due to profound economic causes. If we try to take advantage of small and fortuitous differences, we shall be playing the part of petty politicians and cheap diplomats. But we shall gain nothing worth while by it. There are a vast number of diplomats who play on this, they play for several months, make their careers, and then come to grief.

Are there any radical antagonisms in the modern capitalist world that must be utilised? There are three principal antagonisms, and I should like to enumerate them. The first, the one nearest to us, is the relations between Japan and America. War is brewing between them. They cannot live in peace on the shores of the Pacific, although those shores are three thousand versts apart. This rivalry is unquestionably due to the relations between their capitalisms. There is a vast literature devoted to the future Japanese American war. That war is brewing, that war is inevitable is beyond doubt. The pacifists are trying to evade this question to obscure it by general phrases, but anybody who studies the history of economic relations and diplomacy cannot entertain the slightest doubt that an economic war is ripe and is being prepared politically. One cannot take up a single book devoted to this question without seeing that war is ripening. The world has been divided up, Japan has seized a vast number of colonies. Japan has a population of fifty million, and she is comparatively weak economically. America has a population of a hundred and ten million, she has no colonies, although she is several times richer than Japan. Japan

has seized China, which has a population of four hundred million and the richest coal reserves in the world. How can this plum be retained? It is absurd to think that a stronger capitalism will not deprive a weaker capitalism of everything the latter has plundered. Can the Americans remain indifferent under such circumstances? Can strong capitalists be left by the side of weak capitalists and be expected not to seize what they can? What would they be good for in that case? But in such a state of affairs, can we, as Communists, remain indifferent and merely say "We shall carry on propaganda for Communism in these countries." That is true, but that is not all. The practical task of Communist policy is to take advantage of this hostility and to incite one against the other. Here a new situation arises. Take the two imperialist countries, Japan and America. They want to fight, they will fight, for the supremacy of the world, for the right to loot. Japan will fight in order that she may continue to plunder Korea which she is plundering with unprecedented brutality, combining all modern technical inventions with purely Asiatic torture. We recently received a Korean newspaper relating what the Japanese are doing. Here we find combined all the methods of tsarism and the latest technical perfections with a purely Asiatic system of torture and unparalleled brutality. But the Americans would like to snatch this Korean tidbit. Of course, defence of the fatherland in such a war would be a heinous crime, a betrayal of socialism. Of course, to support one country against another would be a crime against Communism. But we Communists must use one country against another. Are we not committing a crime against Communism? No, because we are doing so as a socialist state, which is carrying on Communist propaganda and is obliged to take advantage of every hour granted it by circumstances in order to gain strength as rapidly as possible. We have begun to gain strength, but very slowly. America and the other capitalist countries are growing in economic and military might at a devilish speed. However much we gather our forces, we shall grow incomparably more slowly.

We must take advantage of the situation that has arisen—that is the whole purpose of the Kamchatka concessions. Vanderlip came to our country, he is a distant relative of the well known billion

aire, if he is to be believed, but since our intelligence service in the Cheka, which is excellently organised, unfortunately does not yet extend to the United States of America, we ourselves have not yet established the kinship of these Vanderlips. Some people even say that there is no kinship at all. I do not undertake to judge my knowledge is confined to having read the book by Vanderlip,* the Vanderlip who was in our country and who is described as such a high personage, who was received with great honour by all the kings and ministers—from which it must be inferred that his purse is tightly stuffed—and who argued with them in the tone in which people talk to each other at a meeting something like ours, and calmly talked of how Europe must be restored. If ministers spoke with him so respectfully, that must mean that Vanderlip has connections with billionaires. His book reveals the standpoint of a businessman who knows nothing else, and who, observing Europe, says “It looks as if nothing will come of it and everything will go to the devil.” This book is full of hatred of Bolshevism. A most interesting book also from the point of view of agitation, better than any Communist book, because its final conclusion is “I’m afraid this patient can’t be cured, although we have plenty of money and means for a cure.”

Well, this Vanderlip brought with him a letter to the Council of People’s Commissars. This letter is a very interesting letter, for with the extreme frankness, cynicism and coarseness of an American kulak he says “We are very strong in 1920, in 1923 our navy will be still stronger. But Japan is hampering our forces and we shall have to fight her and you cannot fight without kerosene and oil. If you were to sell us Kamchatka, I can assure you that the enthusiasm of the American people would be so great that we would recognise you. The presidential elections in March will result in a victory for our party. If, however, you do not lease us Kamchatka, I assure you there will be no such enthusiasm.” That is almost the literal contents of his letter. We have before us absolutely naked imperialism, which does not even consider it necessary to assume any sort of attire, because it thinks that it is magnificent enough without it. When this letter was received, we said that we must clutch at the opportunity with both hands. That

he is economically right is shown by the fact that the Republican Party in America is on the eve of a victory. For the first time in the history of America there were people in the South who voted against the Democrats. It is therefore clear that here we have the economically correct reasoning of an imperialist. Kamchatka belongs to the former Russian Empire. That is true. Whom it belongs to at the present moment is not known. It seems that it is the property of the state which is called the Far Eastern Republic, but the boundaries of that state have not been precisely determined. True, certain documents are being written on that score, but, first, they have not yet been written, and, secondly, they have not yet been endorsed. The Far East is dominated by Japan, who can do anything she likes there. If we hand over to America Kamchatka, which legally belongs to us but which has in fact been seized by Japan, we shall clearly gain thereby. That is the basis of my political reasoning, and on this basis we at once decided to conclude a treaty with America immediately. Of course, we must bargain, since no merchant will respect us if we do not bargain. Comrade Rykov accordingly began to bargain, and we drew up a draft agreement. But when it came to signing, we declared "Everybody knows who we are, but who are you?" It turned out that Vanderlip could not give a guarantee, and we then said that we were accommodating. Why, this is only a draft, and you said yourself that it would come into force when your party gains the upper hand, it has not gained the upper hand yet, and so we will wait.

A draft agreement is not binding in any way, we can reject it at any moment. In that case we shall only have lost time in negotiating with Vanderlip and a few sheets of paper; but we have gained something already. One has only to take the European reports to realize that we have gained. Not a single report is received from Japan which does not refer to the great uneasiness caused by the expected concessions. Japan declares "We shall not tolerate this, it is infringing our interests." By all means, defeat America, we shall not object to that. We have already set Japan and America at loggerheads, to put it crudely, and have thereby gained an advantage. We have also gained as far as the Americans are concerned.

Who is Vanderlip? We have not established who he is—but it is known that in the capitalist world telegrams are not dispatched all over the world about ordinary citizens. And when he left us, telegrams were flying all over the world. Well, he related that he had obtained an advantageous concession and began to praise Lenin everywhere. This is rather funny, but allow me to tell you that in this funny situation there is a morsel of politics. When Vanderlip had finished all his negotiations here, he wanted to meet me. I took counsel with the representatives of the appropriate departments and asked whether I ought to receive him. They said, "Let him leave more satisfied." Vanderlip came to see me, we conversed about all these matters, and when he began to relate that he had been in Siberia, that he knows Siberia, that he comes from a worker's family, like the majority of American billionaires, and so on, that they value only practical matters, that only when they see a thing do they believe it—I replied, "Well, you are practical people, if you take a look at the Soviet system you will introduce it in your own country." He stared at me, astonished at the turn the conversation had taken, and said to me in Russian (the whole conversation had been in English), "Perhaps." I asked in surprise where he had got his knowledge of Russian. "Why, I have spent twenty five years riding through the greater part of the regions of Siberia on horseback." At parting he said "I shall have to say in America that Mr. Lenin has no horns." I did not at once grasp his meaning, since I understand English badly. "What did you say? Repeat it." He is a lively old fellow—pointing to his temples he said, "No horns." There was an interpreter present who said, "That is just what he says." In America they are convinced that I have horns here, that is to say, the bourgeois say that I am branded by the devil. "And now I shall have to say that there are no horns," said Vanderlip. We parted very amiably. I expressed the hope that on the basis of friendly relations between the two states, not only would the concession be concluded, but mutual economic assistance would develop normally. All in this sort of tone. Then the telegrams were sent flying with stories of Vanderlip, who had arrived from abroad. Vanderlip compared Lenin with Washington and Lincoln. Vanderlip asked for my autographed portrait. I

declined, because when you give a portrait you write 'To Comrade So and so,' and one could not write "To Comrade Vanderlip" Yet these were the kind of telegrams that arrived, whence it is clear that this whole affair played a certain part in imperialist policy Harding—the man who has been elected President, but who will take office only next March—when the news of the Vanderlip concessions came out, issued an official denial, stating, "I know nothing, I have no relations with the Bolsheviks and have heard nothing about any concessions" This was during the elections, and, for all you know, to confess during elections that you have business with the Bolsheviks may cost you votes

This whole deal means deflecting the imperialist forces from us—while the imperialists are sitting and sighing and waiting for an opportune moment to strangle the Bolsheviks, we are deferring that moment When Japan launched into the Korean venture, the Japanese said to the Americans "Of course, we can beat the Bolsheviks, but what will you give us for it? China? We shall take her in any case, whereas here we have to go ten thousand versts to beat the Bolsheviks, with the Americans in our rear No, that is not the way to conduct politics" Even at that time the Japanese could have beaten us in a few weeks had there been a double track rail road and had America supplied transport facilities What saved us was that while Japan was gobbling up China she could not move westward, through all Siberia, with America in her rear, and she did not want to pull the chestnuts out of the fire for America

What would have saved us still more would have been a war between the imperialist powers If we are obliged to tolerate such scoundrels as the capitalist thieves, each of whom is preparing to plunge a knife into us, it is our direct duty to make them turn their knives against each other When thieves fall out, honest men come into their own The gain is of a different kind—a purely political gain Even if this concession does not come off, the project for the concession alone will result in an economic gain it will give us part of its products If the Americans began to receive a part of the products, it would be advantageous to us There are such quantities of oil and ore in Kamchatka that we are obviously not in a position to work them

I have pointed to one imperialist antagonism one which it is our duty to take advantage of, the antagonism between Japan and America. There is another antagonism, the antagonism between America and the rest of the capitalist world. Nearly the whole of the capitalist world of "victors" emerged from the war with tremendous gains. America is strong, everybody is now in debt to her, everything depends on her, she is being more and more hated, she is robbing everybody, and she is robbing them in a very original way. She has no colonies. England emerged from the war with vast colonies. So did France. England offered America a mandate—that is the language they use nowadays—over one of the colonies she had seized, but America refused. Evidently American merchants reason somewhat differently. They saw that war plays a definite part both as regards the resulting ruin and as regards the temper of the workers, and they came to the conclusion that there was no advantage in accepting a mandate. But, naturally, they will not permit this colony to be used by other states. All bourgeois literature testifies to a growing hatred of America, while in America there is a growing demand for an agreement with Russia. America had a treaty with Kolchak providing for recognising and supporting Kolchak, but here they have already come to grief once and all they got for their pains were losses and disgrace. Thus we have before us the greatest state in the world, which in 1923 will have a navy stronger than the British navy, but a state which is encountering the growing enmity of the other capitalist countries. We must take this trend of circumstances into account. America cannot come to terms with Europe—that is a fact proved by history. Nowhere has the Versailles Treaty been described so well as in the book by Keynes, the British representative at Versailles.* In this book he scoffs at Wilson and the part he played in the Versailles Treaty. At Versailles, Wilson proved to be an utter simpleton, with whom Clemenceau and Lloyd George played as with a pawn. Thus everything goes to show that America cannot come to terms with the other countries because they are separated by a profound economic rift, because America is richer than the others.

We shall therefore examine all questions relating to concessions from this standpoint. America is inevitably in a state of antagonism

ism with the colonies, and if she attempts to go deeper she will help us tenfold. The colonies are seething with indignation, and when you touch them, whether you like it or not, whether you are rich or not—and the richer the better—you will help us, and Messieurs the Vanderlips will be sent flying. That is why this rift is the main consideration for us.

And the third rift is between the Entente and Germany. Germany has been vanquished, crushed by the Versailles Treaty, but she possesses vast economic potentialities. Germany is the second country in the world in degree of economic development, if America is taken as the first. The experts even say that as far as the electrical industry is concerned she is superior to America, and you know that the electrical industry is of tremendous importance. In respect to the extent of application of electricity, America is superior, but in technical perfection Germany is superior. And on such a country has been imposed the Versailles Treaty, a treaty under which she cannot possibly live. Germany is one of the most powerful and advanced of capitalist countries. She cannot tolerate the Versailles Treaty. And Germany is obliged to seek for an ally against world imperialism, for, although she is herself imperialist, she has been suppressed.

These, then, are the three tangles that are hopelessly muddling the whole game of the imperialists. That is the whole crux of the matter. And that is why from the political point of view we must with all our heart—or, better, without a heart, but calculatingly—favour concessions.

I now pass to economics. When we touched on Germany we were touching on economics. Germany cannot exist economically now after the Peace of Versailles, and not Germany alone, but all the defeated countries, like Austria-Hungary in her former dimensions; although part of her has fallen to the victorious states, she cannot exist under the Versailles Treaty. In Central Europe this forms a vast union, possessing enormous economic and technical might. From the economic standpoint they are all needed for the restoration of the world economy. If you carefully read the decree on concessions of November 23 again and again, you will see that we stress the significance of the world economy, and we do so

intentionally This is undoubtedly a correct standpoint In order to restore world economy, Russian raw materials must be utilised You cannot get along without utilising them—that is economically true This is admitted by the purest bourgeois who studies economy and who regards things from a purely bourgeois point of view This is admitted by Keynes, who wrote the book *The Economic Consequences of the Peace*, and by Vanderlip, who has travelled all over Europe as a financial magnate, for the reason that there has proved to be very little raw materials available in the world, they having been dissipated in the war He says they must rely on Russia And Russia now comes forward and declares to the world We undertake to restore international economy—here is our plan This is economically correct During this period the Soviet power has grown stronger, and not only has it grown stronger, but it comes forward with a plan for the restoration of the whole world economy The rehabilitation of international economy with a plan of electrification rests on a scientifically correct basis With our plan we shall most certainly attract the sympathy not only of the workers but also of sensible capitalists, irrespective of the fact that for them we are “these terrible Bolshevik terrorists,” and so forth Our economic plan is therefore a correct one, and when they read this plan, the whole petty bourgeois democracy will waver to our side, for the imperialists have already fallen out among themselves, while here a plan is being put forward to which the engineers and the economists can have nothing to object We are passing to the realm of economy and are proposing a positive constructive programme to the whole world

We are transferring the question to the anti capitalist plane We come forward and say that we are undertaking to construct the whole world on rational economic lines, and there can be no doubt that this is correct There can be no doubt that if we set about the work in the proper way, with modern machines, the whole world economy can immediately be restored with the help of science

It is a kind of production propaganda we are carrying on when we say to the bosses “You capitalist gentlemen are useless while you are going to rack and ruin, we are building in our own way, is it not therefore time, gentlemen, to come to terms with us?” To

which all the capitalists of the world will have to reply, although grudgingly "Yes, perhaps it is time, let us sign a trade agreement"

The British have already drawn up one draft and sent it to us It is being discussed, and a new period is setting in They have arrived at an impasse in the war, and must now fight in the economic field To us this is quite natural We never dreamt that, after we had fought, peace would come and the capitalist lion would lie down with the socialist lamb No The fact that you have to fight us in the economic field is tremendous progress We have submitted to you a world programme which treats concessions from the point of view of the world economy This is economically indisputable It cannot be refuted by a single engineer or a single agronomist dealing with the question of national economy And many capitalists say that without Russia there cannot be a stable system of capitalist states But we are coming forward with such a programme as builders of world economy on another plan This is of tremendous propaganda value Even if they do not concede a single concession—I regard that as quite possible—even if all that comes of this talk of concessions will be a certain number of Party meetings and decrees, but not a single concession, nevertheless we have already gained something Apart from the fact that we have put forward a plan for the building of economy, we are winning over all the states that have been ruined by the war At the congress of the Third, Communist International I said that the whole world is divided into oppressed nations and dominant nations¹ The oppressed nations constitute not less than seventy per cent of the population of the earth The Peace of Versailles has added to them another hundred or hundred and fifty million people

We are indeed coming forward now not only as the representatives of the proletarians of all countries, but also as the representatives of the oppressed peoples A journal of the Communist International recently appeared entitled *The Peoples of the East** The Communist International has issued the following slogan for the peoples of the East "Proletarians of the world and the op

¹ See 'Report on the International Situation and the Principal Tasks of the Communist International,' *Selected Works* Vol X—Ed

pressed peoples, unite!" Certain comrades asked "When did the Executive Committee give orders to change slogans?" I indeed do not remember it. Of course from the standpoint of *The Communist Manifesto* this is wrong, but *The Communist Manifesto* was written in entirely different conditions, whereas from the point of view of present day politics this is correct. Relations have become tense. The whole of Germany is seething, the whole of Asia is seething. You have read how the revolutionary movement is developing in India. In China there is a fierce hatred of the Japanese, and also of the Americans. In Germany there is a seething hatred of the Entente, which will be understood only if we examine the hatred of the German workers for their own capitalists. As a result, they have made Russia the direct representative of the entire mass of the oppressed population of the earth, the peoples are being taught by the course of events to regard Russia as a centre of attraction. A Menshevik newspaper in Georgia recently wrote "There are two forces in the world the Entente and Soviet Russia."* Who are the Mensheviks? They are people who keep their noses to the wind. When we were weak internationally, they cried, "Down with the Bolsheviks!" When we began to grow stronger, they cried "We are neutral!" Now that we have beaten off the enemies, they say, "Yes, here are two forces."

In the decree on concessions we come forward in the name of all humanity with an economically irreproachable programme for the restoration of the economic forces of the world by utilising all raw materials, wherever they are to be found. It is important for us that there should not be starvation anywhere. You capitalists cannot eliminate it, and we can. We come forward as the representatives of seventy per cent of the population of the earth. Whatever may come of the project, economically it is indisputable. The economic aspect of concessions is important irrespective of whether they will be concluded or not.

As you see, I have been obliged to make a rather long introduction and to demonstrate the advantages of concessions. Of course concessions are important to us also from the point of view of obtaining products. That is undoubtedly true, but the chief thing is political relations. By the time of the Congress of Soviets you

will receive a book of six hundred pages This is the plan for the electrification of Russia This plan has been thought out by the best agronomists and engineers We cannot expedite its realisation without the help of foreign capital and means of production But to obtain assistance we must pay for it So far we have been fighting the capitalists and they said that they would either crush us or they would compel us to pay two hundred billions * But they are not in a position to strangle us, and we shall not pay the debts For the present, we are enjoying a certain respite As long as we are in need of economic assistance we are willing to pay you—that is the way we are putting the question, and any other way would be economically groundless Russia is in a state of industrial disruption, and she is ten times or more worse off than before the war Had we been told three years ago that we would be fighting the whole capitalist world for three years we would not have believed it Now we shall be told that to restore things economically, with only one tenth of the pre war national wealth, is a still more difficult task And indeed it is more difficult than fighting We could fight with the help of the enthusiasm of the working class masses and the peasants, who were defending themselves against the landlords Now we are not defending ourselves against the landlords, now it is a question of restoring economy under conditions to which the peasants are not accustomed Here the victory lies not in enthusiasm dash self sacrifice, but in day to day, tedious, petty workaday effort This is undoubtedly a more difficult matter Where are we to procure the means of production we need? In order to enlist the Americans, we must pay them they are businessmen And what are we to pay them with? Gold? But we cannot throw gold about We cannot give raw materials, because we have not yet fed all our own people When the question arises in the Council of People's Commissars of giving 100 000 poods of grain to the Italians, the People's Commissar of Food gets up and refuses We are bargaining for every trainload of grain Without grain we cannot develop foreign trade What then shall we give? Rubbish? They have enough rubbish of their own They say, let us trade in grain, but we cannot give grain We are therefore solving the problem by means of concessions

I pass to the next point. Concessions create new dangers. I shall mention what I said in the beginning of my speech, namely, that an outcry is going up from the rank and file, from the working class masses "Don't give way to the capitalists, they are clever, cunning." It is pleasant to hear this, because one sees the growth of that vast mass who will fight the capitalists tooth and nail. In the articles of Comrade Stepanov, which he planned in a pedagogical way (first, set forth all the arguments against concessions, and then say that they must be accepted, but certain readers, before they get to the good part, may stop reading, convinced that concessions are unnecessary), there are some true ideas, but when he says that we must not give concessions to England because Lockhart will come here, I cannot agree. We coped with him at a time when the Cheka was only a growing institution, and not as substantial as it is now. And if after three years of war we are unable to catch spies, then all that can be said is that these are not the people to undertake to run the state. We are solving far more difficult problems. For instance, there are at present 300 000 bourgeois in the Crimea. This is a source of future profiteering, espionage and every kind of assistance to the capitalists. But we are not afraid of them. We say that we shall take them, divide them up, subjugate them and digest them.

To say after this that the foreigners, who will be attached to definite concessions, are dangerous to us, or that we shall not be able to keep watch over them, is ridiculous. Why then have gone to all the trouble? Why, then, have undertaken to run the state? The task here is purely one of organisation, and it is not worth dwelling long on it.

But, of course, it would be a great mistake to think that concessions imply peace. Nothing of the kind. Concessions are nothing but a new form of war. Europe fought us, and now the war is moving into a new plane. Formerly, the war was conducted in the field in which the imperialists were infinitely stronger: the military field. If you count the number of guns and machine guns they have and the number we have, the number of soldiers their governments can mobilise and the number our government can mobilise, we undoubtedly ought to have been crushed in a fort-

might Nevertheless, we held our own in this field, and we undertake to continue the fight and are passing to an economic war It is definitely stated that side by side with the concession land, the concession square of territory, there will be our square, and then again their square, we shall learn from them how to organise model enterprises by placing our own side by side with theirs If we are incapable of doing that, it is not worth talking about anything To procure the last word in technology in the matter of equipment at the present time is not an easy task, and we have to learn, learn it in practice, for this is not a thing to be got from schools, universities or courses, and that is why we are granting concessions on the chequerboard system come and learn on the spot

Economically, we have a vast deal to gain from concessions Of course, when settlements are created they will bring capitalist customs with them, they will demoralise the peasantry But watch must be kept, we must put up our Communist influence in opposition at every step This also is a kind of war, the military rivalry of two methods, two formations, two kinds of economy—communist and capitalist We shall prove that we are the stronger We are told "Very good, you have held your own on the foreign front, you are beginning to build, well, build, and we shall see who will win " Of course, the task is a difficult one, but we said, and continue to say, that socialism has the power of example Force is of avail in relation to those who want to restore their power But that exhausts the value of force, and after that only influence and example are of avail We must demonstrate the importance of communism practically, by example We have no machines, the war has impoverished us, the war has deprived Russia of her economic resources, yet we do not fear this rivalry, because it will be useful to us in all respects

This will also be a war in which not the slightest yielding is permissible This war will be useful for us in all respects, and the transition from the old war to the new war will also be useful, not to mention the fact that there is a certain indirect guarantee of peace At the meeting which was so badly reported in *Pravda*,* I said that we have just passed from war to peace, but that we

have not forgotten that war will again return. As long as capitalism and socialism exist, we cannot live in peace. In the end, one or the other will triumph—a funeral dirge will be sung either over the Soviet Republic or over world capitalism. This is a respite in war. The capitalists will seek pretexts for fighting. If they accept the proposal and agree to concessions, it will be harder for them. On the one hand, we shall have the best conditions in the event of war, on the other hand, those who want to go to war will not agree to concessions. The existence of concessions is an economic and political argument against war. The states that might war on us will not war on us if they take concessions. From the point of view of the danger of a collision between capitalism and Bolshevism, it must be said that concessions are a continuation of the war, but in a different sphere. Every step of the enemy will have to be watched. Every means of administration, surveillance, influence and authority will be required. And this is war. We have fought a much bigger war, yet in this war we shall mobilise even larger numbers of the people than in that war. In this war literally everybody who toils will be mobilised, he will be told, and given to understand: "If capitalism does this or that, you workers and peasants who have overthrown the capitalists must do no less than they. Learn."

I am convinced that the Soviet power will overtake and outstrip the capitalists and that the gain will prove to be not merely a purely economic gain. We shall obtain science training, no school, no university is worth anything without practical ability. You will see from the map appended to the pamphlet which will be shown by Comrade Milyutin that we are granting concessions principally in the border regions.* In European Russia there are 70,000,000 dessiatins of Northern forest. About 17,000,000 dessiatins are set aside for concessions. Our lumber enterprises are mapped out checkerboard fashion: forests in Western Siberia, in the Far North. We can lose nothing. The principal enterprises are in Western Siberia, the wealth of which is immeasurable. We cannot develop one hundredth part of them in ten years. But with the help of foreign capitalists, by letting them have one mine, we shall be able to work our own mines. In granting concessions we select the locations

How are the concessions to be organised from the point of view of surveillance? We shall not leave the influence to our masses, the peasants, because they will be demoralised. The peasant, as a small master, tends by his very nature to free trade, while we regard it as criminal. This is a matter for a state struggle. We are suffering from a tremendous crop failure, lack of fodder and loss of livestock, yet at the same time vast areas of land remain uncultivated. In a few days a decree will be issued declaring that every effort must be made to obtain the largest possible sowing of crops and the greatest possible improvement of agriculture.¹

Further, we have a million dessiatins of virgin soil, which we cannot break because we have not enough working animals and the necessary implements, whereas with tractors this land can be ploughed to any depth. It is therefore profitable for us to let this land on lease. If we give up even half even three quarters of the products, we shall be the gainers. This is the policy which directs our actions, and I can say that not only economic considerations, and the position of world economy, but also profound political considerations must underlie our actions. Any other approach to the matter would be shortsighted. If the question is one of the economic advantage or disadvantage of concessions, the economic advantage is beyond dispute. Without concessions we shall not be able to carry out our programme and the electrification of the country, without them, it will be impossible to restore our economy in ten years, and when we restore it we shall be invincible against capital. Concessions do not mean peace with capitalism, but war on a new plane. The war of guns and tanks is replaced by economic war. True, it too harbours new difficulties and new dangers, But I am certain that we shall overcome them. I am convinced that if the question of concessions is put in this way, we shall easily be able to convince the vast majority of the Party comrades, and that instinctive fear of which I have spoken is a useful and healthy fear, which we shall convert into a motive force that will secure us more rapid victory in the impending economic war.

¹ See note to p. 263 *—Ed

A SINGLE ECONOMIC PLAN*

A PAINFUL impression is created by the articles and talk on this subject. Just glance at the articles by L. Kritzman in *Ekonomicheskaya Zhizn* (I—December 14, 1920, II—December 23, III—February 9, IV—February 16, V—February 20). Empty prating. Mere literature. A refusal to reckon with what has been created in this field of a businesslike nature and to study it. Reflections—in five long articles!—on how the study must be approached, in stead of a study of data and facts.

Take the theses of Milyutin (*Ekonomicheskaya Zhizn*, February 19) and Larin (*Ekonomicheskaya Zhizn*, February 20), listen to the speeches of "responsible" comrades. The same fundamental defects as are revealed by Kritzman. Tedious scholasticism, even going to the length of talking about the law of concatenation, and so on, scholasticism, sometimes literary and sometimes bureaucratic, but no real work.

Worse still. A haughty bureaucratic indifference to the real work which has already been done and which must be continued. Again and again, we have a most banal "production of theses," or a pure fabrication of slogans and projects, instead of a careful and attentive study of our own practical experience.

The only serious work in the matter of a single economic plan is *A Plan for the Electrification of the R S F S R*, the report of the "Goelro" (the State Commission for the Electrification of Russia) to the Eighth Congress of Soviets, published in December 1920 and distributed at the Eighth Congress. This book sets forth a single economic plan, drawn up—of course, only by way of a first approximation—by the best scientists in our republic at the order of its supreme bodies. And the fight against the ignorant conceit of the bigwigs, the intellectual conceit of the Communist journalists, must be begun with a ver, modest matter: a simple

account of the history of this book, its contents and its significance

February 27, 1920, *i.e.*, more than a year ago a session of the All Russian Central Executive Committee was held which adopted a resolution on electrification. In this resolution we read

"Side by side with the immediate, essential unpostponable and urgent tasks in the regulation of transport, the elimination of the fuel and food crises, the combating of epidemics and the organisation of disciplined armies of labour, it has for the first time become possible for Soviet Russia to proceed to more systematic economic construction, to the scientific elaboration and the consistent realisation of a state plan for the whole national economy. Bearing in mind the prime importance of electrification realising the significance of electrification for industry agriculture and transport etc., etc. the All Russian Central Executive Committee resolves to instruct the Supreme Council of National Economy, together with the People's Commissariat of Agriculture, to draw up a project for the construction of a system of electric power stations

Is that not clear? "The scientific elaboration of a state plan for the whole national economy"—can one fail to understand these words, this decision of our highest government authority? If the journalists and bigwigs who parade their communism before the "experts" are not acquainted with this decision, one can only remind them that ignorance (of our laws) is no excuse

In pursuance of the decision of the All Russian Central Executive Committee, the Presidium of the Supreme Council of National Economy, on February 21, 1920, endorsed the formation of an Electrification Commission attached to the Department of Electricity, and later the Council of Defence endorsed the statutes of the "Goelro," the determination and endorsement of the composition of which were entrusted to the Supreme Council of National Economy in agreement with the People's Commissariat of Agriculture. By April 24, 1920, the "Goelro" had already issued the first number of its *Bulletin*, containing a detailed programme of work and enumerating the responsible persons, scientists, engineers, agronomists and statisticians who form part of the various sub-commissions, who are in charge of the work in the various districts and who have taken upon themselves various, precisely defined, duties. The mere enumeration of these various works, and of the persons who have undertaken to perform them, fills ten printed

pages of the first number of the *Bulletin*. All the best forces known to the Supreme Council of National Economy and the People's Commissariat of Agriculture, and also to the People's Commissariat of Ways of Communication, have been enlisted in this work.

The result of the work of the "Goelro" is the comprehensive and excellent scientific work above mentioned. More than 180 experts contributed to it. The list of works they submitted to the "Goelro" contains over two hundred titles. We have, firstly, a summary of these works (the first part of the book mentioned, consisting of more than 200 pages): a) electrification and a plan for the state economy, then b) fuel supply (with a detailed "fuel budget" of the RSFSR covering the next decade, and containing a calculation of the number of workers required), c) water power, d) agriculture, e) transport, and f) industry.

The plan is designed approximately for a period of ten years and indicates the number of workers and the amount of power (in thousands of horse power). Of course, this plan is only approximate, preliminary, rough, and contains mistakes, it is a plan "by way of a first approximation," but it is a genuinely scientific plan. We have the precise calculations of the experts on all the principal questions. We have their calculations for every branch of industry. We have—one small example—a calculation of the production of leather, footwear, at the rate of two pairs per person (300,000,000 pairs), and so forth. As a result, we have a material and financial (in gold rubles) balance sheet of electrification (about 370,000,000 working days, so many barrels of cement, so many bricks, so many pounds of iron, copper, etc., the power of turbogenerators, etc.). The balance sheet provides for an expansion ("at a very rough estimate") of manufacturing industry in ten years by 80 per cent, and of the extracting industries by 80-100 per cent. The deficit of the gold balance sheet (plus 11,000,000,000 minus 17,000,000,000, net deficit about 6,000,000,000) "may be covered by concessions and loans."

The locations of the first twenty steam and ten hydro electric regional power stations are indicated, with a detailed description of the economic importance of each station.

Following the general summary, we have in this same volume,

with a separate pagination, the work for each region Northern, Central Industrial (these two are particularly good, precise, detailed and based on abundant scientific material), Southern, Volga, Urals, Caucasus (the Caucasus is taken as a whole on the assumption of an economic agreement being reached between the various republics), Western Siberia and Turkestan For each region a calculation is given not only for the first of the electric power stations We then have what is called "Programme A of the Goelro," a plan for the most rational and economic utilisation of the *existing* electric power stations Another small example in relation to the Northern (Petrograd) Region, it is calculated that an amalgamation of the Petrograd power stations may result in an economy calculated in the following manner as much as half the power (p 69 of the report on the Northern Region) can be directed to the timber floating areas in the North—Murmansk, Archangel, etc An increase in lumbering and the export of timber may under these conditions provide "*as much as half a billion rubles in foreign exchange per annum in the immediate future*"

"The annual proceeds from Northern timber can in the next few years attain to the volume of our gold reserve" (*loc cit*, p 70)—that is, of course, if we are able to pass from talking about a plan to studying and *applying* the plan which has actually been drawn up by the scientists!

It must also be said that on a number of questions (naturally, very, very far from all) we have the beginnings of a calendar programme, that is to say, not only a plan in general, but also a calculation for each year, from 1921 to 1930, of the number of power stations that can be put into operation and the extent to which existing power stations can be enlarged (again, of course, on the condition mentioned, one not easily realised with our intellectual literary and bigwig bureaucratic habits)

In order to appreciate to the full the vastness and value of the work accomplished by the "Goelro," let us take a glance at Germany There a similar work has been performed by a certain scientist, Ballod * He has drawn up a scientific plan for the socialist reconstruction of the whole national economy of Germany In capitalist Germany this plan hung fire, remained a piece of jour

nalism, the work of an isolated individual. Ours was a commission given by the state, we mobilised hundreds of experts, and in ten months (of course, not in two months, as was originally indicated) we obtained a single economic plan, scientifically constructed. We are legitimately entitled to be proud of this work, only we must *understand how* to utilise this plan, and it is precisely the failure to understand *this* that we now have to combat.

The resolution of the Eighth Congress of Soviets states

"the congress approves the work of the Supreme Council of National Economy, etc., and particularly of the 'Goelro' in drawing up a plan of electrification for Russia rates this plan as the first step in a great economic innovation, instructs the All Russian Central Executive Committee, etc., to complete the elaboration of this plan and to endorse it, unconditionally doing so in the shortest possible time. It gives instructions that all measures shall be taken for the widest popularisation of this plan. The study of this plan must be introduced in all educational institutions of the republic without exception," etc.

Nothing is so strikingly characteristic of the maladies—bureaucratic and intellectual maladies—of our apparatus, especially the higher bodies, than the attitude towards this resolution to be observed in Moscow, the attempts to "interpret" it in a distorted way, even to the extent of rejecting it. The journalists are not popularising the plan that has been drawn up, but are writing theses and indulging in empty arguments as to how to proceed to draw up a plan! The bigwigs, in a purely bureaucratic way, stress the necessity of "endorsing" the plan, by which they mean not the assignment of concrete tasks (to build this and that at such and such a time, to purchase this and that abroad, and so on), but something absolutely muddleheaded, such as the drawing up of a *new* plan! The lack of understanding of the matter is monstrous. We hear talk like this: part at least of the old must first be restored before we proceed to build anything new,—electrification looks like electrofiction, why not gasification?—there are bourgeois experts on the "Goelro," very few Communists,—the "Goelro" should produce cadres of experts and not a general planning commission,* and so forth.

It is this confusion of opinion that is dangerous, for it indicates an inability to work, the predominance of an intellectual

and bureaucratic conceit in place of real work. These jibes about the fantastic character of the plan, these inquiries about gasification, betray the conceit that comes of ignorance. Frivolously to correct the work of hundreds of the best experts, to crack banal jokes, conceitedly to parade one's right "not to endorse"—is this not a disgrace?

After all, we must learn to value science and reject the "Communist" conceit of dilettantes and bureaucrats, we must learn to work systematically, drawing the lessons from our own practical experience.

Of course, by their very nature, "plans" are things that can be talked and argued about endlessly. But it is stupid to indulge in general animadversions and disputes about the "principles" (of constructing a plan) when the thing is to set to work to study the given, the only scientific plan and to amend it on the basis of the indications given by *practical* experience and by a more detailed study. Of course, the bigwig and bigwigs will always retain the right "to endorse" and "not to endorse." If this right is understood sensibly and if the decision of the Eighth Congress regarding the endorsement of the plan it has approved and has instructed to have popularised as widely as possible is understood sensibly, endorsement must be taken to mean placing a series of orders and giving a series of instructions to purchase this and that at such and such a time in such and such a place, to begin to build this and that, to collect and transport such and such material, and so forth. If, however, it is interpreted in a bureaucratic way, "endorsing" means the caprice of the bigwigs, red tape, playing with verification commissions, in a word, the murder of real work by sheer bureaucracy.

Let us examine the matter from yet another aspect. It is particularly necessary that the scientific plan of electrification should be co-ordinated with the current practical plans and their actual realisation. This is of course, absolutely incontestable. But how, precisely, are they to be co-ordinated? In order to know this, it is necessary that the economists, writers and statisticians should not prate about a plan in general, but should study in detail the fulfilment of our plans, the mistakes we commit in this practical work and the methods of correcting these mistakes. Unless this study is undertaken we shall be blind. If this study is undertaken, and

provided practical experience is studied, there remains, in addition, only the very small matter of administrative technique. We have planning commissions galore. For co-ordination, take two persons from the department in the charge of John Jones and one from the department in the charge of Paul Smith, or *vice versa*. Join them up with a sub-commission of the general planning commission. It is obvious that this is administrative technique and nothing more. Try this and that, choose the better course—why, it is too absurd to talk about.

The fact of the matter is that our people are unable to put a thing on a proper footing and they replace real work by intellectual and bureaucratic scheme hatching. We had, and we still have, current food and fuel plans. We have made obvious mistakes in both. There cannot be two opinions on this point. Instead of drawing up useless theses, a capable economist will sit down and study reports, figures and facts, will analyse our own practical experience and say: There is a mistake here, there is a mistake there, it must be corrected in such and such a way. On the basis of such a study, a capable administrator will propose, or himself undertake, a shake up of personnel, change the form of reports, re-organise the apparatus, and so forth. With us you will find neither the one nor the other businesslike and efficient approach to the single economic plan.

And that is just the trouble—the question of the attitude of the Communist to the experts, of the administrator to the scientists and writers, is wrongly treated. In the question of the single economic plan, as in every other question there are aspects—and new aspects may always arise—that demand the decision only of Communists, or that demand only administrative treatment. That is indisputable. But that is a naked abstraction. And just now it is the Communist writers and Communist administrators whose attitude to this question is wrong, for they have failed to understand that we must learn more from bourgeois experts and scientists and do less playing at administration. There is not, nor can there be, any single economic plan except the plan already drawn up by the “Goelro.” It must be amplified, further developed, corrected and applied to the facts of the situation on the basis of the

indications afforded by practical experience after it has been carefully studied. The contrary opinion is only "pseudo radical and in reality ignorant conceit," to use the words of the Party programme. Ignorant conceit in a no less degree is the idea that any other general planning commission in the RSFSR than the "Goelro" is possible, which, of course, does not preclude the possible advantage of partial and businesslike improvements of its personnel. Only on this basis, only by continuing what has been begun, can we effect anything truly constructive, in the sense of improving the general plan of our national economy, otherwise it will be merely playing at administration, or, more simply, caprice. It is the duty of the Communists within the "Goelro" to do less bossing, or rather not to boss at all, but to observe an extremely cautious and tactful attitude to experts in science and technology ("in most cases they are inevitably imbued with a bourgeois outlook and bourgeois habits," as the programme of the Russian Communist Party has it), learning from them and helping them to expand their outlook on the basis of the achievements and data of the particular science concerned, remembering that an engineer will come to accept communism *not as* the pre-revolutionary underground propagandist and writer came to accept it, *but through the data of his science*, that the agronomist will come to accept communism *in his own way*, the timber expert in his way, and so on. A Communist who has not proved his ability to co-ordinate and modestly direct the work of the experts, making a detailed study of the substance of the matter, is frequently harmful. We have a good many Communists like that, and I would give a dozen of them for a single bourgeois expert who has honestly studied his subject and is well informed.

Communists not on the "Goelro" can help in two ways in the matter of creating a single economic plan and putting it into effect. If they are economists, statisticians or writers, they must first study our own practical experience, and only on the basis of a detailed investigation of our own facts recommend corrections of mistakes or improvements of work. Investigation is a matter for the scientists, and since it has for a long time been a question with us not of general principles but of practical experience, here

again an "expert in science and technology," even though bourgeois, is ten times more valuable to us than a conceited Communist who is prepared at any moment of the day or night to write "theses," issue "slogans" and utter naked abstractions. More knowledge of the facts and less phrasemongering claiming to be based on communist principles¹

On the other hand, if a Communist is an administrator his first duty is to be on his guard against a passion for bossing, to be able first to take account of what science has already established, to ask first whether the facts have been verified, to see first that a study (in reports, in the press, at meetings, etc.) is made of where we have actually made a mistake, and only on this basis to set about correcting what has been done. Less of the methods of Tit Titych¹ ("I can endorse or not endorse") and more study of our practical mistakes.

It has long ago been noted that for the most part people's shortcomings are bound up with their merits. Such are the shortcomings of many of our leading Communists. For decades we have been working in a great cause, preaching the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, we have been inculcating distrust of the bourgeois experts, exposing them, depriving them of power and crushing their resistance. It was a great cause, a cause of historic importance. But one has only to exaggerate ever so little, and the truth that there is only one step from the sublime to the ridiculous is confirmed. We have convinced Russia, we have won Russia for the toilers from the exploiters, we have crushed the exploiters—we must learn to administer Russia. And to do that we must learn to be modest and to respect the efficient work of the "experts in science and technology", to do that we must learn to analyse in an efficient and careful way our numerous *practical* mistakes and to correct them, gradually but persistently. Less intellectual and bureaucratic conceit, more study of what our practical experience, both in the centre and in the localities, is giving and of what science has already given us.

February 1921

¹ Tit Titych—a merchant ridiculed in one of Ostrovsky's comedies.—*Ed Fng ed*

PART IV
THE PARTY PROGRAMME
(1918 19)

REPORT ON REVISING THE PROGRAMML AND NAME OF THE PARTY *

*Delivered at the Seventh Congress of the Russian Communist
Party (Bolsheviks), March 8, 1918*

COMRADES, as you know, a fairly detailed discussion has developed in the Party since April 1917 on the question of changing the name of the Party, and it was therefore possible in the Central Committee at once to reach a decision which, it seems will give rise to no great dispute, and, perhaps, hardly to any dispute at all. The Central Committee, namely, submits to you the proposal to change the name of our Party to the Russian Communist Party, in brackets—Bolsheviks. We all admit this addition to be necessary, because the word "Bolshevik" has acquired rights of citizenship not only in the political life of Russia, but in the whole foreign press which is following the main features of the development of events in Russia. The fact that the name "Social Democratic Party" is scientifically incorrect has also been explained in our press. When the workers created their own state they reached a situation in which the old conception of democracy—bourgeois democracy—proved to have been surpassed in the process of the development of our revolution. We arrived at a type of democracy which has never existed in Western Europe. It enjoyed rights only in the Paris Commune, and of the Paris Commune Engels said that the Commune was not a state in the proper sense of the word. In a word, inasmuch as the toiling masses themselves are undertaking the business of governing the state and creating an armed force in support of the given state system, a special apparatus of government disappears, a special apparatus for the exercise of state force disappears, and, consequently, we cannot advocate democracy in its old form.

On the other hand when undertaking socialist reforms we

must clearly envisage the aim towards which these reforms are in the long run directed, namely, the creation of a communist society, which does not confine itself to expropriating the factories, mills, land and means of production, which does not confine itself to strict accounting and control of the production and distribution of products, but which proceeds to the realisation of the principle "from each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs" That is why the name "Communist Party" is the only scientifically correct one The objection that it might furnish grounds for confusing us with the anarchists was immediately rejected in the Central Committee, because the anarchists never call themselves Communists simply, but always with certain additions As far as that is concerned, there are all kinds of varieties of Socialism, however, they do not lead to the Social Democrats being confused with the social reformists, the national socialists and similar parties

On the other hand, an important argument in favour of changing the name of the Party is that to this day the old official Socialist Parties in all the advanced countries of Europe have not rid themselves of the intoxication of social chauvinism and social patriotism, which led to the complete collapse of official European Socialism during the present war, with the result that hitherto nearly every official Socialist Party has been a real brake on the working class revolutionary Socialist movement, a real obstacle to that movement And our Party, the sympathy for which on the part of the masses of the toilers of all countries is at the present time undoubtedly very great, is obliged to come forward with as determined, sharp, clear and unambiguous a statement as possible to the effect that it is breaking its contacts with this old official Socialism And changing the name of the Party will be the method best calculated to achieve this end

Further, comrades, a more difficult question was the question of the theoretical part of the programme, its practical and political part. As regards the theoretical part of the programme, we have certain materials symposiums on the revision of the Party programme have been published in Moscow and Petrograd, * in two of the chief theoretical organs of our Party, *Prosveshchenie*,

published in Petrograd, and *Spartak*, published in Moscow,* articles have been printed arguing in favour of one or another trend in the amendment of the theoretical part of the programme of our Party. As far as that is concerned, a certain amount of material exists. Two principal points of view have manifested themselves, which, in my opinion, do not differ in principle, at least radically. One point of view, which I advocated, is that there are no grounds for discarding the old theoretical part of our programme, and that this would even be wrong. All that is required is to supplement it by a description of imperialism as the highest stage in the development of capitalism, and then by a description of the era of socialist revolution, based on the fact that this era of socialist revolution has begun. Whatever may be the fate of our revolution, of our detachment of the international proletarian army, whatever may be the subsequent vicissitudes of the revolution, at any rate, the objective situation of the imperialist countries which have become involved in this war, and which have reduced the most advanced countries to a state of starvation, impoverishment and retrogression, is objectively hopeless. And here we must mention what Frederick Engels said thirty years ago, in 1887, when describing the probable prospects of a European war.¹ He spoke of how crowns in Europe would be rolling in the dust by the dozen with nobody desirous of picking them up, he described the incredible disruption which would be the fate of the European countries, and stated that there could be only one final result to the horrors of a European war, which he expressed as follows: "Either the victory of the working class or the creation of conditions which will render victory possible and essential." On this subject Engels expressed himself with extreme precision and caution. In contradistinction to the people who distort Marxism, who advocate their belated and false reasoning to the effect that there can be no socialism on the basis of disruption, Engels very well understood that not only does every war, even in a most advanced society, cause disruption, retrogression, torments and misfortune for the masses,

¹ See note to p. 106 **—Ed.

who become stifled in blood, and that it is impossible to guarantee that it will lead to the victory of socialism, but, he said it would be "either the victory of the working class or the creation of conditions which will render victory possible and essential," that is to say that here, consequently, a series of difficult transitional stages are also possible under the circumstances of a tremendous destruction of culture and productive forces, but that the result can only be the rise of the vanguard of the toiling masses, the working class, and a transition to a situation in which it will take the power into its hands in order to create a socialist society. For, however great may be the destruction of culture, it cannot be stricken out of historical life, it will be difficult to make good, but no amount of destruction can result in this culture disappearing entirely. In one part or another, in one material residue or another, this culture is indestructible, the only difficulty will be to restore it. And so, this is one point of view, the view which favours retaining the old programme, supplementing it by a description of imperialism and the beginning of the social revolution.

I expressed this point of view in the draft programme which I had printed.* Another draft was printed by Comrade Sokolnikov in the Moscow symposium. Another point of view was expressed in our conversations, and in particular by Comrade Bukharin in the press and by Comrade V. Smirnov in the Moscow symposium. This point of view was that the old theoretical part of the programme must either be completely deleted, or almost entirely eliminated and replaced by a new part describing not the history of the development of commodity production and capitalism, which our programme gave, but the modern stage of the highest development of capitalism—imperialism—and the direct transition to the era of the social revolution. I do not think that these two points of view differ radically and in principle, but I will defend my own point of view. I think it is theoretically wrong to strike out the old programme, which describes the development from commodity production to capitalism. There is nothing incorrect in it. That is the way it happened, and that is the way it is happening now, for commodity production gave birth to capital

ism, and the latter led to imperialism. This is the general perspective of world history, and the fundamentals of socialism should not be forgotten. Whatever the subsequent vicissitudes of the struggle may be, however many partial zigzags it may be necessary to overcome (and there will be very many of them—we see from experience what tremendous twists the history of the revolution is making, and so far only in our country, matters will be far more complex and proceed far more rapidly, the speed of development will be more furious, and the twists will be more complicated when the revolution becomes converted into a European revolution), in order not to get lost in these zigzags and twists of history and to preserve the general perspective—in order to perceive the crimson thread that connects together the whole development of capitalism and the whole road to socialism, which, it is natural, seems to us to be straight and which we must picture as being straight, in order to see the beginning, the continuation and the end (in actual life it will never be straight, it will be incredibly complex)—in order not to get lost in these twists, in order not to get lost in the periods of retreat, retirement or temporary defeat, or when history, or the enemy, throws us back—in my opinion the important and the only theoretically correct thing is not to cast out the old basic programme. For we here in Russia are now only in the first transitional stage from capitalism to socialism. History has not granted us those peaceful conditions which for a certain period were theoretically conceived of, and which would have been desirable for us and would have permitted us to pass through these transitional stages rapidly. We at once see how much difficulty has been caused by the civil war in Russia and how this civil war is becoming interwoven with a whole series of wars. Marxists have never forgotten that violence will be an inevitable accompaniment of the collapse of capitalism on its full scale and of the birth of a socialist society. And this violence will cover a historical period, a whole era of wars of the most varied kinds—imperialist wars, civil wars within the country, the interweaving of the former with the latter, national wars, the emancipation of the nationalities crushed by the imperialists and by various combinations of im-

perialist powers which will inevitably form various alliances with each other in the era of vast state capitalist and military trusts and syndicates. This is an era of tremendous collapses, of wholesale military decisions of a violent nature, of crises. It has already begun, we see it clearly—it is only the beginning. We therefore have no grounds for throwing out everything that relates to the description of commodity production in general, of capitalism in general. We have only just taken measures to throw off capitalism completely and to begin the transition to socialism. We do not and cannot know how many stages transitional to socialism there will be. This will depend on when the European socialist revolution begins on a real scale, on how easily, rapidly or slowly it copes with its enemies and emerges on to the highroad of social development. This we do not know, but the programme of a Marxist party must proceed from facts which have been established with absolute precision. Therein alone lies the strength of our programme, which has been confirmed throughout all the vicissitudes of the revolution. Marxists must base their programme on this foundation alone. We must proceed from facts which have been established with absolute precision, facts which show that the development of exchange and commodity production has become the dominating historical phenomenon, throughout the world has led to capitalism, and capitalism has passed into imperialism. This is an absolutely undeniable fact, this, first of all, must be recorded in the programme. That this imperialism is the beginning of the era of social revolution is also a fact, a fact obvious to us and one which we must clearly realise. In the sight of the whole world, recording this fact in our programme, we are raising the torch of social revolution not only in agitational speeches, but as a new programme, declaring to all the peoples of Western Europe: "This is what we have derived from the experience of capitalist development. This is what capitalism was, this is the way it passed to imperialism, and this is the era of social revolution which is beginning and in which chronologically the first role fell to our share." We shall come forward and face all the civilised countries with this manifesto, which will not merely be an ardent appeal, but which will have an absolutely precise foundation, derived

from facts which are admitted by all Socialist Parties. All the clearer will be the contradiction between the tactics of these parties, which have now betrayed socialism, and those theoretical premises which we all share and which have come to form part of the body and soul of every class conscious worker: the development of capitalism and its transition to imperialism. On the eve of the imperialist wars, the congresses in Chemnitz and Basle * gave in their resolutions a description of imperialism, the contradiction between which and the present tactics of the social traitors is outrageous. We must therefore repeat this fundamental thing in order the more clearly to demonstrate to the toiling masses of Western Europe what it is their leaders are being accused of.

This is the fundamental reason why I consider such a structure of the programme to be the only correct one theoretically. To throw out the description of commodity production and capitalism as though it were old rubbish is not a thing that follows from the historical nature of what has taken place, for we have not passed beyond the first stages of the transition from capitalism to socialism, and our transition is being complicated by peculiarities existing in Russia which do not exist in the majority of civilised countries. Consequently, it is not only possible, but also inevitable, that these transitional stages will be different in Europe, and therefore to concentrate all attention on the specifically national transitional stages, which are essential for us but which may not be essential for Europe, would be theoretically incorrect. We must begin with the general basis of the development of commodity production, the transition to capitalism and the transformation of capitalism into imperialism. Thereby we shall be theoretically taking up and consolidating a position from which nobody who has not betrayed socialism can dislodge us. From this follows an equally inevitable conclusion: the era of social revolution is beginning.

We do so while retaining the basis of undeniably established facts.

Further, our task is to give a description of the Soviet type of state. I tried to expound the theoretical views on this question

in the book *The State and Revolution*¹ It seems to me that the Marxian view of the state was in the highest degree distorted by the dominant official Socialism of Western Europe, and this has been most strikingly corroborated by the experience of the Soviet revolution and the creation of the Soviets in Russia In our Soviets there is still a great deal that is rough and unfinished, of that there can be no doubt, it is clear to everyone who examines their work But what in the Soviets is important, what is historically valuable, what represents a forward step in the world development of socialism is the fact that here a new type of state has been created With the Paris Commune this was the case for a few weeks, in a single city, without people realising what they were doing The Commune was not understood by those who created it, they created with the instinct of the masses aroused to genius, and not one of the factions of French Socialists realised what they were doing We are in conditions in which, thanks to the fact that we have the benefit of the Paris Commune and the long development of German Social Democracy, we can clearly see what we are doing in creating the Soviet power In spite of all the roughness and lack of discipline which mark the Soviets, and which are a survival of the petty bourgeois character of our country, in spite of all this, the masses of the people have created a new type of state It is being practised not for weeks, but for months, not in one city, but in a vast country, among several nations This type of Soviet government has proved its worth, since it has been transferred to a country so different in all respects as Finland, where there are no Soviets but where the type of government is also new and proletarian * This is then a proof of what is theoretically indisputable, namely, that the Soviet power is a new type of state, in which there is no bureaucracy, no police, no standing army, and in which bourgeois democracy is replaced by a new democracy—a democracy which brings to the forefront the vanguard of the toiling masses, turning them into legislators, and executives, and a military guard, and which creates an apparatus capable of re educating the masses

¹ Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol VII—Fd

In Russia this has barely begun, and badly at that. If we realise what is bad in what we have begun, we shall overcome it, that is, if history give us the opportunity of labouring over Soviet government for any respectable length of time. It therefore seems to me that a description of the new type of state should occupy a prominent place in our programme. Unfortunately, we have now been obliged to work on the programme under the conditions which accompany the work of government, conditions of such incredible haste that we have not even been able to summon a meeting of our commission and to work out an official draft of the programme. What has been distributed to our comrades the delegates¹ is called only a rough draft, and everybody will see that clearly. In it a fairly large amount of space is devoted to the question of Soviet government, and it seems to me that here the international significance of our programme should make itself felt. It would be a great mistake, it seems to me, were we to confine the international significance of our revolution to appeals, slogans, demonstrations, manifestoes, and so on. That is not enough. We must show the European workers concretely what it is we have undertaken, how we have undertaken it and how it is to be understood, that will impel them to the concrete question of how socialism is to be brought about. Here they must see and say the Russians are setting about a good cause, and if they are setting about it badly, we shall do better. For this purpose we must give as much concrete material as possible and tell of the new thing we have attempted to create. In Soviet government we have a new type of state, let us endeavour to describe its aims and construction, let us endeavour to explain what it is in this new type of democracy, in which there is so much that is chaotic and absurd, that constitutes its living soul, namely, the transfer of power to the toilers, the elimination of exploitation and the apparatus of repression. The state is an apparatus of repression. The exploiters must be suppressed, but they cannot be suppressed by a police, they can be suppressed only by the masses themselves. The apparatus must be connected with the masses, must represent

¹ Pp. 329-34 in the present volume.—Ed

the masses, as do the Soviets. They are much nearer the masses, they make it possible to keep close to the masses, they give greater opportunity of training these masses. We know very well that the Russian peasant is anxious to learn, but we want him to learn not from books but from his own experience. Soviet government is an apparatus, an apparatus through which the masses will immediately begin to learn how to administer the state and to organise production on a national scale.

That is a tremendously difficult task. But what is historically important is that we are setting about accomplishing it, and accomplishing it not only from the standpoint of our country alone, but by calling for the assistance of the European workers. We must give a concrete explanation of our programme precisely from this general point of view. That is why we consider that this is a continuation of the path of the Paris Commune. That is why we are convinced that, having adopted this path, the European workers will be able to help us. They are in a better position to do what we are doing, and the emphasis is being transferred from the formal point of view to concrete conditions. While in former times such a demand as the guarantee of the right of assembly was very important, our view regarding the right of assembly is that now nobody can interfere with assembly and that all the Soviet government must ensure is a place for assembly. The important thing for the bourgeoisie is the proclamation of high sounding principles. "All citizens enjoy the right of assembly, but of assembly under the open sky—we shall not give you assembly halls." Whereas we say "Less talk and more business." The palaces must be taken over—and not only the Taurida Palace, but many others—while about the right of assembly we say nothing. And this must be extended to all the other points of the democratic programme. We must ourselves act as judges. Every citizen to a man must act as a judge and participate in the government of the country. And what is important to us is to enlist all the toilers to a man in the government of the state. That is a tremendously difficult task. But socialism cannot be introduced by a minority, a party

It can be introduced by tens of millions of people when they have learnt how to do everything themselves. What we consider to our credit is that we are striving to assist the masses to act about this immediately themselves and not to study it from books and lectures. That is why, if we announce our aims concretely and clearly, we shall stimulate the European masses to discuss this question and to raise it practically. Perhaps what has to be done we are doing badly, but we are impelling the masses to do what they should do. If what our revolution is doing is not fortuitous—and of that we are profoundly convinced—not the product of a decision of our Party, but an inevitable product of every revolution which Marx called a people's revolution, that is, a revolution created by the masses of the people themselves under their own slogans, by their own endeavours, and not by repeating the programme of the old bourgeois republic—if we put the matter in this way we shall achieve what is most essential. And here we come to the question of whether the difference between the maximum programme and the minimum programme should be eliminated.* Yes and no. I do not fear its being eliminated, because the point of view which still existed in the summer should not exist now. I said at that time, when we had not yet taken power, that it was "early"—now, when we have taken power and have tested it, it is not early.¹ In place of the old programme, we must now write a new programme of Soviet government, not renouncing the use of bourgeois parliamentarism in any way. To think that we shall not be thrown back is utopian.

Historically, it cannot be denied that Russia has created a Soviet republic. We say that should we be thrown back we shall, without renouncing the use of bourgeois parliamentarism—if class, hostile forces drive us back to this old position—come to what has been won by experience. Soviet government, the Soviet type of state, a state of the type of the Paris Commune. This must find expression in the programme. In place of the mini-

¹ See the article "Towards the Revision of the Party Programme," Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XXI—Ed.

mun programme, we shall introduce a programme of Soviet government. A description of the new type of state must occupy a prominent place in our programme.

It is clear that we cannot work out a programme just now. We must work out its fundamental propositions and submit it to a commission, or to the Central Committee, in order that the fundamental theses should be worked out. Or even simpler the work can be done on the basis of the resolution on the Brest Litovsk conference, which has already produced theses *. On the basis of the experience of the Russian revolution, such a description of Soviet government must be given and then practical reforms proposed. It seems to me that it must be noted here in the historical part that the expropriation of the land and production has now begun. We are here setting the concrete task of organising consumption, universalising the banks and converting them into a system of state organisations embracing the whole country, which will give us public book keeping, accounting and control carried out by the population itself and forming the basis of the subsequent steps towards socialism. I think that this part, the most difficult, should be formulated in the form of concrete demands of our Soviet government—what we at present want to do, what reforms we intend to carry out in the sphere of bank policy, in the matter of organising the output of products, the organisation of exchange, accounting and control, the introduction of labour service, and so on. When it becomes possible, we shall add what steps, little steps and tiny steps, we have taken in this connection. Here it must be absolutely precise, clear and definite what it is we have begun and what still remains incomplete. We know very well that a vast part of what we have done has not been completed. Without exaggerating in any way, speaking quite objectively, without departing from the facts, we must state in the programme what actually exists and what we are preparing to do. We shall present this truth to the European proletariat and say that this must be done, so that they can say the Russians are doing this and that badly, but we shall do better. And when the masses are carried away by this endeavour, the

socialist revolution will be invincible. The imperialist war, a thoroughly predatory war, is going on before our eyes. We must expose it, depict the war as a union of the imperialists against the Socialist movement. Such are the general considerations which I think it necessary to discuss with you, and on the basis of which I now make the practical proposal to exchange basic views on this question and then perhaps to work out a few fundamental theses, here and now, but if this should be considered difficult, to forego this now and submit the question of the programme to the Central Committee, or to a special commission, which shall be instructed, on the basis of the existing materials and of the verbatim reports or detailed minutes of the congress, to draw up a programme, which must immediately change the name. It seems to me that we can do this at the present time, and I think that everybody will agree that, in view of the unprepared state of our programme as regards formulation in which events have found us, nothing else can be done at present. I am convinced that we shall be able to do it in a few weeks. There are in all the currents of our Party enough theoretically grounded people to give us a programme within a few weeks. It may, of course, contain many mistakes, apart from inaccuracies of formulation and style, because we have not months at our disposal, in order to sit down to perform this work in the calm atmosphere necessary for the work of formulation.

We shall correct all these mistakes in the process of our work, with the complete assurance that we are giving the Soviet government the opportunity of carrying out this programme. If we, at least, formulate precisely, without departing from reality, the fact that Soviet government is a new type of state, the form of the dictatorship of the proletariat, that we have set democracy different tasks, that we have translated the tasks of socialism from the general, abstract formula of "expropriating the expropriators" into such concrete formulas as the nationalisation of the banks and the land, this will indeed be an essential part of the programme.

The agrarian question must be altered to the effect that we

are here witnessing the first signs of how the small peasant, who desires to take sides with the proletariat, who desires to help it in the socialist revolution, has, in spite of all his prejudices, in spite of all his old views, set himself the practical aim of accomplishing the transition to socialism. We do not impose this on other countries, but it is a fact. The peasant has shown by his deeds that he desires to help and is helping the proletariat, which has won power, to accomplish socialism. Those who ascribe to us the desire to introduce socialism forcibly have no grounds for doing so. We shall divide up the land justly, from the point of view primarily of the small farm. At the same time we are giving preference to communes and large workers' artels. We are in favour of the monopolisation of trade in grain. We are in favour—so the peasant was told—of expropriating the banks and the factories. We are prepared to help the workers accomplish socialism. I think that the fundamental law on the socialisation of the land must be issued in all languages. This is being done—if it has not already been done. We shall state this idea concretely in the programme—we must express it theoretically without departing one step from the concrete established facts. In the West this will be carried out in a different way. Perhaps we are making mistakes, but we hope that the proletariat of the West will correct them. And we turn to the European proletariat with the request to help us in our work.

We can thus draw up our programme within a few weeks, and as to any mistakes we may make—life will repair them, we shall correct them ourselves. They will be a featherweight compared with the beneficial results which will follow.

ON CHANGING THE NAME OF THE PARTY AND THE PARTY PROGRAMME

*Resolution Adopted by the Seventh Congress of the
Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks)*¹

THE congress resolves henceforward to call our Party (the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party of the Bolsheviks) the *Russian Communist Party*, adding in brackets "Bolsheviks"

The congress resolves to alter the programme of our Party, revising the theoretical part or supplementing it by a description of imperialism and the era of international socialist revolution which has begun

Further, the change in the political part of our programme must consist of as precise and circumstantial a description as possible of the new type of state, the Soviet Republic, as a form of the dictatorship of the proletariat and as a continuation of the conquests of the international workers' revolution begun by the Paris Commune. The programme must state that our Party will not renounce the use even of bourgeois parliamentarism, should the course of the struggle cast us back for a certain time to that historical stage which has now been passed by our revolution. But in all cases and in all circumstances, the Party will fight for a Soviet republic, as the democratically highest type of state, as a form of dictatorship of the proletariat and as a form of overthrowing the yoke of the exploiters and crushing their resistance

The economic part of our programme, including the agrarian part and also the pedagogical and other parts, must be revised in the same spirit and in the same direction. Major emphasis must be laid on a precise description of the economic and

¹ See note to p. 311 *—Ed

other reforms begun by our Soviet government and a concrete exposition of the immediate concrete tasks which the Soviet government has set itself and which follow from the practical steps of expropriating the expropriators that we have already taken

The congress instructs a special commission to draw up, with as little delay as possible, on the basis of the indications given above, a programme for our Party and to endorse it as the programme of our Party

March 9, 1918

PROPOSAL REGARDING THE REVISION OF THE PROGRAMME OF THE PARTY

*Made to the Seventh Congress of the Russian Communist Party
(Bolsheviks) March 8, 1918¹*

COMRADES, permit me to read the draft of a resolution for mulating a somewhat different proposal, which, however, is in essence somewhat similar to that of which the previous speaker spoke I should like to draw the attention of the congress to the following resolution

[*Reads*]"

Comrades, this proposal is marked by the fact that I should like first to advocate my idea of expediting the publication of the programme and to instruct the Central Committee directly to publish it, or to instruct it to set up a special commission

The speed of development is so furious that the matter should not be deferred With all the difficulties of the present time, we shall secure a programme which will contain many mistakes, but that is no great misfortune—the next congress will amend it Although that will be very early for correcting the programme events are moving so fast that if it is necessary to make any corrections in the programme, we shall make them Our programme will now be constructed not so much on books as on practice, on the experience of the Soviet government I therefore think that it would be in our interests to address ourselves to the international proletariat not with ardent appeals and exhortatory meeting speeches, not with commands, but with a precise and concrete programme of our Party No matter if the programme be less satisfactory than the one we should have secured if it had

¹ See note to p. 311 *—*Fd*

* See pp. 325-26 in the present volume — *Ed*

been worked out by several commissions and endorsed by the congress

I should like to hope that we shall be able to adopt this resolution unanimously, because I have avoided the difference to which Comrade Bukharin refers, I have formulated it in such a way as to leave the question open * We may hope that if changes of too great a nature do not take place, we shall be in a position to secure a new programme which will serve as a precise document of the all Russian Party, and there will not be that most unpleasant position in which I found myself when at the previous congress a Left Swede asked me "And what is the programme of your Party—is it the same as that of the Mensheviks?" You should have seen how the Swede, who realised clearly how tremendously we have departed from the Mensheviks, opened his eyes We cannot allow the continuance of this monstrous contradiction I think that this will be of practical benefit to the international working class movement and that what we shall gain will undoubtedly be more important than the fact that the programme will contain mistakes

That is why I propose to expedite this matter and do not fear the fact that the congress will have to correct it

ROUGH DRAFT OF A PROGRAMME¹

TAKE my draft² as a basis (pamphlet, pp 19 *et seq*) * Leave the theoretical part, deleting the last paragraph of the first part (p 22 in the pamphlet, from the words "Objective conditions" to the words "content of the socialist revolution,"** *i.e.*, delete five lines)

In the following paragraph (p 22), beginning with the words "The fulfilment of this task," introduce the amendment referred to in the article "Towards the Revision of the Party Programme," *Prosveshchenie*³ (No 1 2, September October 1917), p 93

In the same paragraph insert twice in place of "social chauvinism"

- 1) "*opportunism* and social chauvinism",
- 2) "between *opportunism* and social chauvinism on the one hand, and the revolutionary internationalist struggle of the proletariat for the achievement of a socialist system, on the other"****

Further,**** everything has to be altered approximately in the following way

The revolution of November 7 (October 25), 1917, in Russia accomplished the dictatorship of the proletariat supported by the poor peasantry or the semi proletarians

This dictatorship confronts the Communist Party in Russia with the task of

Carrying to conclusion, completing, the expropriation of the landlords and the bourgeoisie and the transfer of all the factories, mills railways, banks, fleet and other means of production and circulation to the possession of the Soviet Republic, which has already begun,

¹ See note to p 311 *—*Ed*

² The name of the Party simply "Communist Party" (without the addition of "Russian"), and in brackets (Party of the Bolsheviks)

³ See note to p 313 *—*Ed*

Utilising the alliance between the urban workers and the peasants, which has already led to the abolition of private property in land, and the law on the transitional form from small peasant economy to socialism, which the present day ideologists of the peasantry which came over to the side of the proletarians¹ call the socialisation of the land, for the purpose of a gradual but undeviating transition to the social cultivation of the land and to large scale socialist agriculture,

Consolidating and further developing the federative republic of the Soviets, as an immeasurably higher and more progressive form of democracy than bourgeois parliamentarism and as the only type of state which corresponds, on the basis of the experience of the Paris Commune of 1871 and the experience of the Russian revolutions of 1905 and 1917-18, to the period of transition from capitalism to socialism i.e., the period of the dictatorship of the proletariat,

Taking full and comprehensive advantage of the torch of world socialist revolution ignited in Russia in order, by paralysing the attempts of the imperialist bourgeois states to interfere in the internal affairs of Russia or to unite for a direct struggle and war against the Socialist Soviet Republic to carry the revolution into the more advanced countries and into all countries generally

TEN THESES ON SOVIET GOVERNMENT

The Consolidation and Development of Soviet Government

The consolidation and development of Soviet government as a form—already tested by experience and advanced by the mass movement and the revolutionary struggle—of the dictatorship of the proletariat and of the poor peasantry (semi-proletarians)

The consolidation and development must consist in the accomplishment (the widest, most general and systematic accomplishment) of the tasks which historically fall to this form of state power, to this new type of state, namely

- 1) The union and organisation of the toiling and exploited

¹ Lenin is referring to the Left Socialist Revolutionaries—Ed

masses oppressed by capitalism—and only of them, *i.e.*, only of the workers and poor peasants, the semi-proletarians—with the automatic exclusion of the exploiting classes and the wealthy representatives of the petty bourgeoisie

2) The union of the most energetic, active and class conscious part of the oppressed classes, their vanguard, which must train the whole toiling population to a man for independent participation in the administration of the state, not theoretically, but practically

4) (3) The abolition of parliamentarism (as the separation of legislative from executive functions), the combination of legislative and executive state functions. The fusion of government with legislation

3) (4) Closer contact on the part of the whole apparatus of state power and of the state administration with the masses than was the case with earlier forms of democracy

5) The creation of an armed force of workers and peasants as little as possible divorced from the people (Soviets equal the armed workers and peasants). The organised arming of the people as one of the first steps to the complete arming of the whole people

6) A fuller democracy, as a result of less formality and greater ease of election and recall

7) Close (and direct) contact with the trades and the producing economic units (elections by factory and by local peasant and handicraft district). Such close contact makes profound socialist reforms possible

8) (Partly, if not entirely, forms part of the previous clause)—makes it possible to eliminate the bureaucracy, to get along without it, the beginning of the realisation of this possibility

9) Transfer of emphasis in questions of democracy from a formal recognition of the formal equality of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, of the poor and the rich, to the practical feasibility of the toiling and exploited masses of the population enjoying freedom (democracy)

10) The further development of the Soviet organisation of the state must consist in the fact that every member of a Soviet should

be obliged to perform some permanent duty in the government of the state, in addition to attending the meetings of the Soviet, and in the fact that the whole population to a man should be gradually brought both to take part in Soviet organisation (on condition that they submit to the organisations of the toilers) and to serve in the government of the state

The accomplishment of these tasks demands

a) In the political sphere to develop the Soviet Republic.

Advantages of the Soviets (*Prosveshchenie*, pp 13 14), [six points*],

The extension of the Soviet constitution, *in the measure that* the resistance of the exploiters ceases, to the *whole* population.

A federation of nations as a transition to a *conscious* and closer unity of the toilers, who have learnt *voluntarily* to rise above national enmity,

Ruthless suppression of the resistance of the exploiters is essential, the standards of "general" (*ie*, bourgeois) democracy must be subordinated to this aim and must make way for it

"Liberties" and democracy *not* for all, but *for* the toiling and exploited masses for the purpose of their emancipation from exploitation, ruthless suppression of the exploiters,

Emphasis to be transferred *from* formal *recognition* of liberties (as was the case under bourgeois parliamentarism) to actually ensuring the *enjoyment* of liberties by the toilers and those who have overthrown the exploiters, *e g*, from the *recognition* of freedom of assembly to the *transfer* of all the best halls and premises to the workers, from the recognition of freedom of the press to the transfer of the best printing establishments to the workers, etc

A brief enumeration of these "liberties" from the old minimum programme**

[The arming of the workers and disarming of the bourgeoisie]

Transition *through* the Soviet state to the gradual destruction of the state by systematically enlisting an increasing number of citizens and then all citizens *to a man*, in a direct and *daily* share of the burden of governing the state

b) In the economic sphere

The socialist organisation of production on a national scale administration by the *workers' organisations* (trade unions factory committees, etc.) under the general guidance of the Soviet power, the only *sovereign* power

Also—transport and distribution (at first the state monopoly of “trade,” then the complete and final replacement of “trade” by planned and organised *distribution* through the trade unions of the trade and industrial employees, under the guidance of the Soviet government)

—The compulsory union of the *whole* population in consumers' and producers' communes

While (temporarily) not abolishing money, nor prohibiting individual acts of sale and purchase by individual families, we must first of all make it legally compulsory for all such deals to be effected through the consumers' and producers' communes

—Immediately proceed to the complete realisation of universal labour service, extending it as cautiously and gradually as possible to the small peasants who work on their own farms with out employing hired labour,

The first measure, the first step towards universal labour service must be the introduction (compulsory introduction) of consumers' workers' (budget) books for all wealthy persons (*i.e.*, persons with an income of over 500 rubles per month, owners of enterprises employing hired labour, families employing servants, and so on)

Sale and purchase may also be permitted not through the commune of the person concerned (while on journeys, at the bazaars, etc.), but with the obligation to register such deals (if they exceed a certain sum) in the consumers' workers' books

—Bank business to be entirely concentrated in the hands of the state, and the whole currency and trade turnover in the hands of the banks. The universal practice of bank accounts gradual introduction of the compulsory obligation to maintain current accounts in the banks, first on the part of the largest, and then of *all* the enterprises of the country. Money must compulsorily be

kept in the banks and transfers of money made *only* through the banks

—The universal practice of accounting and control over the entire production and distribution of products, this accounting and control to be exercised at first by the workers' organisations and then by the whole population *to a man*

—The organisation of competition between the various (all) consumers' and producers' communes of the country for the steady improvement of organisation, discipline and productivity of labour, for the adoption of better technical methods, for economy of labour and products, for the gradual reduction of the working day to six hours and for the gradual equalisation of *all* wages and salaries in *all* professions and categories

—Undeviating and systematic measures for (the adoption of *Massenspeisung*¹) the replacement of individual housekeeping of individual families by common catering for large groups of families

In the pedagogical sphere the old points* plus

In the financial sphere

The replacement of indirect taxation by a progressive income and property tax and the contribution (of a definite part) of the revenues from state monopolies. In this connection, the assignment in kind of bread and other products to workers engaged in definite forms of socially necessary work on behalf of the state

INTERNATIONAL POLICY

Support of the revolutionary movement of the socialist proletariat in the advanced countries in the first place

Propaganda Agitation Fraternisation

A ruthless struggle against opportunism and social chauvinism

Support of the democratic and revolutionary movement in all countries in general, and particularly in the colonies and dependent countries,

Emancipation of the colonies Federation, as a transition to voluntary amalgamation

March 1918

¹ Public catering *Fd*

ON THE PARTY PROGRAMME

*Report Delivered at the Eighth Congress of the Russian
Communist Party (Bolsheviks), March 19 1919¹*

COMRADES, according to the division of subjects agreed on between Comrade Bukharin and myself, there devolves on me the task of explaining the point of view of the commission on a number of concrete and most disputable points, or points which interest the Party most at the present time

I shall begin by dealing in brief with the points which Comrade Bukharin touched on at the end of his report as points of dispute among us in the commission. The first relates to the manner of drawing up the preamble to the programme. In my opinion, Comrade Bukharin did not quite correctly set forth here the reason why the majority of the commission rejected all attempts to draw up the programme in such a way as to delete everything that dealt with the old capitalism. Comrade Bukharin spoke in such a way that he sometimes seemed to imply that the majority of the commission feared what might be said about this, feared that the majority of the commission would be accused of insufficient respect for the past. There can be no doubt that when the position of the majority of the commission is put in this way it seems very funny. But it is very far from the truth. The majority of the commission rejected these attempts because they would be wrong. They would not correspond to the real state of affairs. Pure imperialism, without the fundamental basis of capitalism, has never existed, nowhere exists, and never will exist. This is a wrong generalisation of everything that was said of the syndicates, cartels, trusts and finance capitalism, when finance capitalism was depicted as though it had none of the foundations of the old capitalism under it.

¹ See note to p. 311 *—Ed

That is wrong. It would be particularly wrong for the era of the imperialist war and for the era following the imperialist war. Engels in his time, in one of his reflections on the future war, wrote that it would involve more devastation than that which followed the Thirty Years' War, that in a large degree mankind would be reduced to savagery, that our artificial apparatus of trade and industry would collapse. At the beginning of the war the social traitors and opportunists boasted of the tenacity of capitalism and derided "the fanatics or semi-anarchists," as they called us. "Look," they said, "these predictions have not been fulfilled. Events have shown that they were true only of a very small number of countries and for a very short period of time!" And now, not only in Russia and not only in Germany, but even in the victorious countries, a gigantic collapse of modern capitalism is setting in, so gigantic that it frequently removes this artificial apparatus and gives birth to the old capitalism anew.

When Comrade Bukharin stated that an attempt might be made to present an integral picture of the collapse of capitalism and imperialism, we objected to it in the commission, and I must object to it here. Just try it, and you will see that it cannot be done. Comrade Bukharin made one such attempt in the commission, and himself rejected it. I am absolutely convinced that if anybody could do this, it is Comrade Bukharin, who has studied this question very extensively and thoroughly. I assert that such an attempt cannot be successful, because the task is a false one. We in Russia are now experiencing the consequences of the imperialist war and the beginning of the dictatorship of the proletariat. At the same time, in a number of the regions of Russia, cut off from each other more than formerly, we are frequently experiencing a regeneration of capitalism and the development of its early stage. That is something we cannot escape. If the programme were to be written in the way Comrade Bukharin wanted, it would be a false programme. At the best, it would be a reproduction of all the best that has been said of finance capitalism and imperialism, but it would not reproduce reality, precisely because there is no such integrality in this reality. A programme made up of heterogeneous parts is inelegant (but that, of course,

is not important)—but any other programme would simply be incorrect. However unpleasant it may be, whatever it may lack in proportion, we shall be unable for a long time to escape this heterogeneity, this necessity of constructing from various materials. When we do escape it, we shall create another programme. But then we shall already be living in a socialist society. It would be ridiculous to pretend that things will be then what they are now.

We are living at a time when a number of the most elementary and fundamental manifestations of capitalism have been revived. Take, for instance, the collapse of transport, which we are experiencing so well, or rather so badly, in our own case. Why, this same thing is taking place in other countries, even in the victor countries. And what does the collapse of transport mean under the imperialist system? A return to the most primitive forms of commodity production. We know very well what bag traders are. This word, I think, has hitherto been unknown to foreigners. But what is the case now? Speak to the comrades who have arrived for the congress of the Third International. It appears that similar words are beginning to appear in both Germany and Switzerland. And this is a category you cannot fit into any dictatorship of the proletariat, you have to return to the very sources of capitalist society and commodity production.

To escape from this sad reality by creating a smooth and integral programme is to escape into something ethereal and supermundane, to write a false programme. And it is by no means reverence for the past, as Comrade Bukharin politely hinted, which induced us here to insert passages from the old programme. What appeared to be implied was this: the programme in 1903 was written with the participation of Lenin, the programme is undoubtedly a bad one, but since old people love to recall the past, in a new era a new programme has been drawn up which, out of reverence for the past, repeats the old programme. If it were so, such cranks ought to be laughed at. I assert that it is not so. The capitalism that was described in 1903 remains in force in 1919 in the Soviet proletarian republic just because of the disintegration of imperialism, because of its collapse. Capitalism of

this kind can be found, for instance, both in the Samara Gubernia and in the Vyatka Gubernia, which are not very far from Moscow. In a period when civil war is rending the country, we shall not emerge from this situation, from this bag trading, very soon. That is why any other structure of the programme would be incorrect. We must state what actually exists, the programme must contain what is absolutely irrefutable, what has been established in fact. Only then will it be a Marxist programme.

Comrade Bukharin fully understands this theoretically and says that the programme must be concrete. But it is one thing to understand and another to practise. Comrade Bukharin's concreteness consists in a bookish exposition of finance capitalism. Actually, we are observing heterogeneous phenomena. We observe in every agricultural gubernia free competition side by side with monopolised industry. Nowhere in the world has monopoly capitalism existed in a whole series of branches without free competition, nor will it exist. To write of such a system is to write of a system which is divorced from reality and false. If Marx said of manufacture that it was a superstructure on mass small production, imperialism and finance capitalism are a superstructure on the old capitalism. If its summit is destroyed, the old capitalism is laid bare. If one holds the point of view that there is such a thing as integral imperialism without the old capitalism, the wish is father to the thought.

This is a natural mistake, one into which it is very easy to fall. And if we had an integral imperialism before us, which had entirely made over capitalism, our task would have been a hundred thousand times easier. It would have resulted in a system in which everything would have been subordinated to finance capital alone. It would then only have remained to remove the top and to transfer what remained to the proletariat. That would have been extremely agreeable, but it is not so in reality. In reality the development is such that we have to act in an entirely different way. *Imperialism is a superstructure on capitalism.* When it begins to collapse, we find ourselves dealing with the destruction of the top and the exposure of the foundation. That is why our programme, if it is to be a true one, must state what actually

exists. There is the old capitalism, which in a number of branches has grown to imperialism. Its tendencies are exclusively imperialistic. Fundamental questions can be examined only from the standpoint of imperialism. There is not a single big question of home or foreign policy which could be settled in any way except from the standpoint of this tendency. It is not of this that the programme now speaks. In reality, there exists a vast subsoil of the old capitalism. There is the superstructure of imperialism, which led to the war, and from this war followed the beginnings of the dictatorship of the proletariat. This is a phase you cannot escape. This fact is characteristic of the very rate of development of the proletarian revolution throughout the world, and will remain a fact for many years to come.

West European revolutions will perhaps proceed more smoothly, nevertheless, very many years will be required for the reorganisation of the whole world, for the reorganisation of the majority of the countries. And this means that during the transition period through which we are now passing, we cannot escape this mosaic reality. We cannot cast aside this reality composed of heterogeneous parts, however inelegant it may be. If the programme were drawn up otherwise than it has been drawn up, it would be a false programme.

We say that we have arrived at the dictatorship. That is clear. But we must know *how* we arrived at it. The past holds fast to us, grasps us with a thousand tentacles, and does not allow us to make a single forward step, or compels us to make these steps as badly as we are making them. And we say that in order that the situation we are arriving at may be understood, it must be stated how we proceeded and what led us to the socialist revolution. We were led to it by capitalism in its early commodity production forms. All this must be understood, because it is only by taking reality into account that we can solve such problems as, let us say, our attitude towards the middle peasantry. And how is it, in deed, that there is such a thing as a middle peasant in the era of purely imperialist capitalism? Why, he did not exist even in purely capitalist countries. If we are to solve the problem of our attitude towards this almost mediæval phenomenon (the middle peasantry)

purely from the standpoint of imperialism and the dictatorship of the proletariat, we shall be absolutely unable to fit ends together, and we shall land in many difficulties. But if we are to change our attitude towards the middle peasant—then also have the goodness to say in the theoretical part where he came from and what he is. He is a small commodity producer. And this is the ABC of capitalism, of which we must speak, because we have not yet got away from it. To brush this aside and say, "Why should we study the ABC when we have studied finance capitalism?" would be frivolous to a degree.

I have to say the same thing with regard to the *national question*. Here too the wish is father to the thought with Comrade Bukharin. He says that it is impossible to admit the right of nations to self-determination. A nation implies the bourgeoisie together with the proletariat. And are we, the proletarians, to recognise the right to self-determination of the despised bourgeoisie? That is absolutely incompatible! Pardon me, it is compatible with what actually exists. If you eliminate this, the result will be sheer fantasy. You refer to the process of differentiation which is taking place in the depths of nations, the process of separation of the proletariat from the bourgeoisie. But let us take a look at the way this differentiation is proceeding.

Take, for instance, Germany, the model of an advanced capitalist country, which in respect to the organisation of capitalism, finance capitalism, was superior to America. She was inferior in many respects, in respect to technical development and production and in respect to politics, but in respect to the organisation of finance capitalism, in respect to the conversion of monopoly capitalism into state monopoly capitalism, Germany was superior to America. She is a model, it would seem. But what has taken place there? Has the German proletariat become differentiated from the bourgeoisie? No! Why, it was only of a few of the large towns that it was reported that the majority of the workers are opposed to the Scheidemannites. How was this? It was owing to the alliance between the Spartacists and the thrice-accursed German Menshevik Independents, who make a muddle of everything and want to wed the system of Soviets to a Constituent Assembly! And this is what

is taking place in Germany! And she, mark you, is an advanced country

Comrade Bukharin says, "Why do we need the right of nations to self determination?" I must repeat what I said in objection to him in the summer of 1917, when he proposed to delete the minimum programme and to leave only the maximum programme I then retorted, "Don't shout until you're out of the wood" When we have conquered power, and even then after waiting a while, we shall do this¹ We have conquered power, we have waited a while and now I am willing to do it We have fully launched into socialist construction, we have beaten off the first assault that threatened us—now it will be in place The same applies to the right of nations to self determination "I want to recognise only the right of the toiling classes to self determination," says Comrade Bukharin That is to say you want to recognise something that has not been achieved in a single country except Russia That is ridiculous

Look at Finland, she is a democratic country, more developed, more cultured than we are In Finland a process of separation, of differentiation of the proletariat is proceeding, proceeding in a peculiar way, far more painfully than was the case with us The Finns have experienced the dictatorship of Germany, they are now experiencing the dictatorship of the Entente. And thanks to the fact that we recognise the right of nations to self determination, the process of differentiation has been facilitated there I very well recall the scene when, at the Smolny, it was my lot to hand an act to Svinhufvud—which in Russian means "swinehead"—the representative of the Finnish bourgeoisie, who played the part of a hang man He amiably shook my hand, we exchanged compliments How unpleasant that was! But it had to be done, because at that time the bourgeoisie was deceiving the people, was deceiving the toilers by declaring that the Muscovites, the chauvinists, the Great Russians, wanted to stifle the Finns It had to be done

And yesterday, was it not necessary to do the same thing in relation to the Bashkir Republic? When Bukharin said "We can recognise this right in some cases," I even wrote down that he had

¹ See "Towards the Revision of the Party Programme," Lenin, *Collected Works* Vol. XXI—Ed

included in the list the Hottentots, the Bushmen and the Indians. Hearing this enumeration, I thought, how is it that Comrade Bukharin has forgotten a small trifle, the Bashkirs? There are no Bushmen in Russia, nor have I heard that the Hottentots have laid claim to an autonomous republic but we have Bashkirs, Kirghiz and a number of other peoples and to these we cannot deny recognition. We cannot deny it to a single one of the peoples living within the boundaries of the former Russian Empire. Let us even assume that the Bashkirs have overthrown the exploiters and we have helped them to do so. But this is possible only where a revolution has fully matured. And it must be done cautiously, so as not to restrain by one's interference the process of differentiation of the proletariat which we ought to expedite. What, then, can we do in relation to such peoples as the Kirghiz, the Sarts, who to this day are under the influence of their mullahs? In Russia the population, having had a long experience of the priests, helped us to overthrow them. But you know how badly the decree on civil marriage is still being put into effect.* Can we approach these Sarts and say, "We shall overthrow your exploiters"? We cannot do this, because they are entirely under the influence of their mullahs. In such cases we have to wait until the given nation develops, until the differentiation of the proletariat from the bourgeois elements, which is inevitable, has taken place.

Comrade Bukharin does not want to wait. He is possessed by impatience. "Why should we? When we have ourselves overthrown the bourgeoisie, proclaimed a Soviet government and the dictatorship of the proletariat, why should we act thus?" This has the effect of a rousing appeal, it contains an indication of our path, but if we were to proclaim only this in our programme, it would not be a programme, but a proclamation. We may proclaim a Soviet government and the dictatorship of the proletariat, and utter contempt for the bourgeoisie, which it deserves a thousand times over, but in the programme we must write absolutely and precisely just what actually exists. And then our programme will be irreproachable.

We hold a strictly class standpoint. What we are writing in the programme is a recognition of what has in fact taken place since

the period when we wrote of the self determination of nations in general. At that time there were still no proletarian republics. It was when they appeared, and only as they appeared, that we were able to write what is here written. "A federation of states of the *Soviet type*." The Soviet type is not quite the Soviets as they exist in Russia, but the Soviet type is becoming international. And this is all we can say. To go farther, one step farther, one hair's breadth farther, would be false, and therefore unsuitable for a programme.

We say that account must be taken of the stage at which the given nation finds itself on the way from mediævalism to bourgeois democracy, and from bourgeois democracy to proletarian democracy. That is absolutely correct. All nations have the right to self determination—there is no need to speak specially of the Hottentots and the Bushmen. The vast majority, most likely nine tenths of the population of the earth, perhaps ninety five per cent, come under this description, since all countries are on the way from mediævalism to bourgeois democracy or from bourgeois democracy to proletarian democracy. This is an absolutely inevitable course. More cannot be said, because it would be wrong, because it would not be what actually exists. To cast out the self determination of nations and insert the self determination of the toilers would be absolutely wrong, because this statement of the question does not reckon with the difficulties, with the zigzag course which differentiation within a nation takes. In Germany it is not proceeding in the same way as in our country. It is proceeding in certain respects more rapidly and in other respects in a slower and more bloody way. Not a single party in our country adopted so monstrous an idea as a combination of Soviets and a Constituent Assembly. Why, we have to live side by side with these nations. The Scheide-mannites are already saying that we want to conquer Germany. That is of course ridiculous, nonsensical. But the bourgeoisie has its own interests and its own press, which is shouting this to the whole world in hundreds of millions of copies, and Wilson is supporting this in his own interests. The Bolsheviks, they declare, have a large army, and they want by means of conquest to implant their Bolshevism in Germany. The best people in Germany—the Spar-

tacists—told us that the German workers are being provoked against the Communists. See, they are told, how bad things are with the Bolsheviks! And we cannot say that things with us are very good. And there they influence the masses with the argument that the proletarian revolution in Germany would result in the same disorders as in Russia. Our disorders are a protracted malady. We are striving against desperate difficulties in creating the proletarian dictatorship in our country. As long as the bourgeoisie, or the petty bourgeoisie, or even part of the German workers, are under the influence of this bugbear—"the Bolsheviks want to establish their system by force"—so long will the formula "the self determination of the toilers" not help matters. We must arrange things so that the German social traitors will not be able to say that the Bolsheviks are trying to impose their universal system, which, as it were, can be introduced into Berlin by Red Army bayonets. And this is what may happen if the principle of the self determination of nations is denied.

Our programme must not speak of the self determination of the toilers, because that would be wrong. It must speak of what actually exists. Since nations are at different stages on the road from mediævalism to bourgeois democracy and from bourgeois democracy to proletarian democracy, this thesis of our programme is absolutely right. With us there have been very many zigzags on this road. Every nation must secure the right to self determination, and that will make the self determination of the toilers easier. In Finland the process of separation of the proletariat from the bourgeoisie is proceeding with remarkable clarity, force and profundity. At any rate, things will proceed there not as they do in our country. If we were to declare that we do not recognise the Finnish nation, but only the toiling masses, that would be sheer banality. We cannot refuse to recognise what actually exists, it will itself compel us to recognise it. The demarcation between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie is proceeding in different ways in different countries. Here we must act with great caution. We must be particularly cautious with regard to the various nations, for there is nothing worse than lack of confidence in a nation. Self determination of the proletariat is proceeding among the Poles. Here

are the latest figures on the composition of the Warsaw Soviet of Workers' Deputies Polish social traitors—333, Communists—297 * This shows that, according to our revolutionary calendar, October there is not very far off It is somewhere about August or September 1917 there But, firstly, no decree has yet been issued stating that all countries must live according to the Bolshevik revolutionary calendar, and even if it were issued, it would not be observed And, secondly, the situation at present is such that the majority of the Polish workers, who are more advanced than ours, better educated share the standpoint of social defensism, social patriotism We must wait We cannot speak here of the self determination of the toiling masses We must carry on propaganda on behalf of this differentiation This is what we are doing, but there is not the slightest shadow of doubt that we must recognise the self determination of the Polish nation now That is clear The Polish proletarian movement is taking the same course as ours, towards the dictatorship of the proletariat, but not in the same way as in Russia And there the workers are being scared by statements to the effect that the Muscovites, the Great Russians who have always oppressed the Poles, want to carry their Great Russian chauvinism into Poland in the guise of communism Communism cannot be imposed by force When I said to one of the best comrades among the Polish Communists, "You will do it in a different way" he replied, "No, we will do the same thing, but better than you" To such an argument I had absolutely nothing to object We must give them the opportunity of fulfilling a modest wish—to create a better Soviet government than ours We have to reckon with the fact that things there are proceeding in rather a peculiar way, and we cannot say, "Down with the right of nations to self determination! We grant the right of self determination only to the toiling masses" This self determination proceeds in a very complex and difficult way It exists nowhere but in Russia and, while foreseeing every stage of development in other countries we must decree nothing from Moscow That is why this proposal is unacceptable in principle.

I now pass to the other points which I am to deal with in accordance with the plan we have drawn up I have given first place

to the question of *small proprietors and the middle peasants* In this respect, point 47 states

'With respect to the middle peasants, the policy of the Russian Communist Party is gradually and systematically to draw them into the work of socialist construction The Party sets itself the task of separating them from the kulaks of winning them to the side of the working class by carefully attending to their needs of combating their backwardness with ideological weapons and not by measures of repression, and of striving in all cases where their vital interests are concerned to come to practical agreements with them, making concessions to them in determining the methods of carrying out socialist reforms "

It seems to me that here we are formulating what the founders of socialism have frequently said regarding the middle peasantry The only defect of this clause is that it is not sufficiently concrete We could hardly give more in a programme But it is not only questions of programme we must discuss at the congress, and we must devote profound, thrice profound attention to the question of the middle peasantry We have just received information to the effect that in the revolts which have already begun to sweep like a wave through agricultural Russia, a *general plan* is clearly discernible, and that this plan is obviously connected with the military plan of the White Guards who have decided on a general offensive in March and on the organisation of a number of revolts In the presidium of the congress there is a draft of a manifesto in the name of the congress, on which a report will be made to you These revolts show as clear as clear can be that the Left Socialist Revolutionaries and a part of the Mensheviks—in Bryansk it was the Mensheviks who instigated the revolt—are acting as direct agents of the White Guards A general offensive of the White Guards, revolts in the villages the interruption of railroad traffic—perhaps it will be possible to overthrow the Bolsheviks in this way? Here the role of the middle peasantry stands out very clearly very forcibly and insistently At the congress we must not only lay particular stress on our accommodating attitude towards the middle peasantry, but also think over a number of measures, as concrete as possible which will directly give the middle peasantry something at least This is insistently demanded both by interests of self preservation and by the interests of the struggle against

our enemies, who know that the middle peasant vacillates between us and them and who are endeavouring to win him away from us. Our position is now such that we possess vast reserves. We know that both the Polish and the Hungarian revolutions are growing and very rapidly. These revolutions will furnish us with proletarian reserves will ease our situation and will to a very large extent reinforce our proletarian basis, which is weak. This may happen in the next few months, but we do not know exactly when it will happen. You know that an acute moment has now arisen and therefore the question of the middle peasantry now assumes tremendous practical importance.

Further, I should like to dwell on the question of *co operation*—that is point 48 of our programme. To a certain extent this point has become antiquated. When we wrote it in the commission, co operatives existed in our country but there were no consumers' communes, but a few days later the decree on the fusion of all forms of co operatives into a single consumers' commune was issued. I do not know whether this decree has been published and whether the majority here present are acquainted with it. If not, tomorrow or the day after this decree will be published. In this respect, this point is already out of date but it nevertheless appears to me that it is necessary, for we all know very well that it is a pretty long way from decrees to fulfilment. We have been toiling and moiling over the co operatives since April 1918, and although we have achieved considerable success, it is not yet a decisive success. We have at times succeeded in organising the population in the co operatives to such an extent that in many of the uyezds ninety eight per cent of the agricultural population are already so organised. But these co operatives which existed in capitalist society are thoroughly imbued with the spirit of bourgeois society and are headed by Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries by bourgeois experts. We have not yet been able to gain their submission and here our task remains unaccomplished. Our decree is a step forward in the sense of creating consumers' communes it decrees that all forms of co operation all over Russia shall be merged. But this decree too even if we carry it into effect entirely, preserves the autonomous sections of workers' co

operatives within the future consumers' communes, because the representatives of the workers' co operatives who have a practical knowledge of the matter told us, and proved, that the workers' co operatives, as a more highly developed organisation, should be preserved, since their operations are demanded by necessity. There were quite a few differences and disputes within our Party over the question of co operation, there was friction between the Bolsheviks in the co operatives and the Bolsheviks in the Soviets. In principle, it seems to me that the question should undoubtedly be settled in the sense that this apparatus, as the only apparatus which capitalism set up among the masses, as the only apparatus which operates among the rural masses, who are still in the stage of primitive capitalism, must be preserved at all costs, developed, and at any rate not discarded. The task here is a difficult one because in the majority of cases the leaders of the co operatives are bourgeois specialists, very frequently real White Guards. Hence the hatred for them, a genuine hatred, hence the fight against them. But it must, of course, be carried through skilfully *we must put a stop to the counter revolutionary attempts of the co operators, but this must not be a struggle against the apparatus of the co operatives*. While cutting off the counter revolutionary leaders, we must subordinate the apparatus itself to our influence. Here the aim is exactly what it is in the case of the bourgeois experts. That is another question to which I should like to refer.

The question of the *bourgeois experts* is provoking quite a lot of friction and divergence of opinion.* When I recently had occasion to speak in the Petrograd Soviet,¹ among the written questions submitted to me there were several devoted to the question of rates of pay. I was asked: is it feasible for a socialist republic to pay as much as 3,000 rubles? We have in fact, included this question in the programme, because dissatisfaction on these grounds has gone rather far. The question of the bourgeois experts has arisen in the army, in industry, in the co operatives, everywhere. It is a very important question of the period of transition from

¹ "Report on the Foreign and Domestic Policy of the Council of People's Commissars Delivered to the Petrograd Soviet, March 12, 1919" Lenin *Collected Works*, Vol. XXIV—Fd

capitalism to communism. We shall be able to build up communism when, with the aid of bourgeois science and technology, we make it more accessible to the masses. There is no other way of building a communist society. But in order to build it in this way, we must take the apparatus from the bourgeoisie, we must enlist all these experts in the work. We have intentionally developed this question in detail in the programme in order that it may be settled radically. We are fully aware of the effects of Russia's lack of cultural development, what it is doing to Soviet government—which in principle has provided an immeasurably higher proletarian democracy, which serves as a model of such democracy for the whole world—how this lack of culture is depreciating Soviet government and reviving bureaucracy. The Soviet apparatus is accessible to all the toilers in word, but in fact it is far from accessible to all of them, as we all know. And not because the laws prevent it from being so, as was the case under the bourgeoisie, on the contrary, the laws assist in this respect. But here laws alone are not enough. A vast amount of educational, organisational and cultural work is required, which cannot be done rapidly by legislation and which demands a vast amount of prolonged work. This question of the bourgeois experts must be settled at this congress absolutely definitely. The settlement of the question will enable the comrades, who are undoubtedly following this congress attentively, to lean on its authority and to realise what difficulties we are up against. It will help those comrades who come up against this question at every step to take part at least in propaganda work.

The comrades here in Moscow who are representing the Spartacists at the congress told us that in Western Germany, where industry is most developed, and where the influence of the Spartacists among the workers is greatest, engineers and managers in very many of the large enterprises would come to the Spartacists although the Spartacists have not yet been victorious there, and say, "We shall follow you." That was not the case in our country. Evidently, there the higher cultural level of the workers, the greater proletarianisation of the technical staffs, and perhaps a number of other causes of which we do not know, have created relations which differ somewhat from ours.

At any rate, here we have one of the chief obstacles to further progress. We must immediately, without waiting for the support of other countries, we must immediately and at once develop our productive forces. We cannot do this without the bourgeois experts. That must be said once and for all. Of course, the majority of these experts are thoroughly imbued with the bourgeois outlook. They must be surrounded by an atmosphere of comradely collaboration, by workers' commissars and by Communist nuclei, they must be so placed that they cannot break away, but they must be given the opportunity of working in better conditions than was the case under capitalism, since this stratum, which has been trained by the bourgeoisie will not work otherwise. To compel a whole stratum to work under the lash is impossible—that we know very well from experience. We can compel them not to take an active part in counter revolution, we can terrify them so as to make them fear to take a White Guard manifesto into their hands. In this respect the Bolsheviks act energetically. This can be done, and this we are doing adequately. This we have all learnt to do. But it is impossible in this way to compel a whole stratum to work. These people are accustomed to cultural work, they advanced it within the limits of the bourgeois system, that is, they enriched the bourgeoisie with tremendous material inventions, while conferring them on the proletariat in insignificant doses—but they advanced culture, that was their profession. As they see the working class promoting organised and advanced strata, which not only value culture but also help to convey it to the masses, they are changing their attitude towards us. When a doctor sees that the proletariat is arousing the toilers to independent activity in fighting epidemics, his attitude towards us completely changes. We have a large stratum of such bourgeois doctors, engineers, agronomists and co operators, and when they see in practice that the proletariat is attracting an increasing number of the masses to this cause, they will be conquered *morally*, and not merely be cut off from the bourgeoisie politically. Our task will then become easier. They will then of themselves be drawn into our apparatus and become part of it. For this, sacrifices are essential. To pay even two billions for this is a trifle. To fear this sacrifice

would be childish, for it would mean that we do not comprehend the tasks that confront us

The dislocation of transport, the dislocation of industry and agriculture is undermining the whole life of the Soviet Republic. Here we must resort to the most energetic measures, bending all the energies of the country to the utmost. We must not practise a policy of petty pinpricks with regard to the experts. These experts are not the servitors of the exploiters, they are active cultural workers, who in bourgeois society served the bourgeoisie, and of whom all Socialists all over the world said that in a proletarian society they would serve us. In this transition period we must endow them with the best possible conditions of life. That will be the best policy. That will be the most economical management. Otherwise, while economising a few hundred millions, we may lose so much that no number of billions will restore what we have lost.

When we discussed the question of rates of pay with the Commissar of Labour, Comrade Schmidt, he mentioned facts like these. He said that in the matter of equalising wages we have done more than has been done anywhere, and more than any bourgeois state can do in scores of years. Take the pre-war rates of pay: a manual labourer used to get one ruble a day, twenty-five rubles a month, while an expert got five hundred rubles a month, not counting those who were paid hundreds of thousands of rubles. The expert used to receive twenty times more than the worker. Our present rates of pay vary from six hundred rubles to three thousand rubles—five times more. We have done a great deal in the matter of equalisation. Of course, we are now overpaying experts, but to pay them a little more for science is not only worth while, but necessary and theoretically essential. In my opinion, this question is dealt with in sufficient detail in the programme. It must be profoundly stressed. Not only must it be settled here in principle, but we must see to it that every member of the congress, on returning to his locality, should, in his report to his organisation and in all his activities, secure its accomplishment.

We have already brought about a profound change of attitude among the vacillating intellectuals. If yesterday we spoke of legal

using the petty bourgeois parties, whereas today we are arresting the Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries, we are applying an absolutely definite system in these oscillations. A very firm line runs through these oscillations, namely, *to destroy counter revolution and to utilise the cultural apparatus of the bourgeoisie*. The Mensheviks are the worst possible enemies of socialism, because they clothe themselves in a proletarian disguise, but the Mensheviks are a non proletarian stratum. In this stratum there is only an insignificant proletarian upper layer, while the stratum itself consists of petty intellectuals. This stratum is coming over to our side. We shall take it over wholly, as a stratum. Every time they come to us, we say, "Welcome!" With every one of these vacillations, part of them come over to us. Such was the case with the Mensheviks and the *Novaya Zhizn*ists and with the Socialist Revolutionaries, such will be the case with all these vacillating elements, who will long continue to get in our way, whine and desert from one camp to the other—you cannot do anything with them. But through all these vacillations we shall be enlisting strata of cultured intellectuals in the ranks of Soviet workers, and shall cut off those elements that continue to support the White Guards.

The next question which, according to the division of subjects, falls to my share is the *question of bureaucracy* and of enlisting the broad masses in Soviet work*. We have been hearing complaints about bureaucracy for a long time, the complaints are undoubtedly well founded. We have done what no other state has done in the fight against bureaucracy. The apparatus which was a thoroughly bureaucratic and bourgeois apparatus of oppression, and which remains such even in the freest of bourgeois republics, we have destroyed to its very foundations. Take, for example, the courts. Here, it is true, the task was easier, we did not have to create a new apparatus, because anybody can act as a judge with the help of the revolutionary sense of justice of the toiling classes. Here we have still far from completed the work, but in a number of regions we have made the courts what they should be. We have created bodies in which not only men, but also women, the most backward and immobile of elements, can serve without exception.

The employees in the other spheres of government are more

hardened bureaucrats The task here is more difficult We cannot live without this apparatus, every branch of government creates a demand for such an apparatus Here we are suffering from the fact that Russia was not sufficiently developed capitalistically Germany, apparently, is suffering less from this, because her bureaucratic apparatus passed through an extensive school, which sucks people dry but which compels them to work and not just wear out armchairs, as happens in our offices We dispersed these old bureaucratic elements, shook them up and then began to place them in new posts The tsarist bureaucrats began to enter the Soviet institutions and practise their bureaucratic methods, they began to assume the colouring of Communists and, for greater success in their careers, to procure membership cards of the Russian Communist Party And so, having been thrown out of the door they fly in through the window! What makes itself felt here most is the lack of cultured forces These bureaucrats may be dismissed, but they can not be re educated all at once Here what chiefly faces us is organisational, cultural and educational problems

We can fight bureaucracy to the bitter end to a complete victory, only when the whole population participates in the work of government In the bourgeois republics not only was this impossible, *but the very law prevented it* The best of the bourgeois republics, no matter how democratic they may be, have thousands of legislative hindrances which prevent the toilers from participating in the work of government We have removed these hindrances, but so far we have not managed to get the toiling masses to participate in the work of government. Apart from the law, there is still the level of culture, which you cannot subject to any law The result of this low cultural level is that the Soviets, which by virtue of their programme are organs of government *by the toilers* are in fact organs of government *for the toilers*, by means of the advanced stratum of the proletariat, but not by means of the toiling masses

Here we are confronted by a problem which cannot be solved except by prolonged education At present this task is an inordinately difficult one for us, because, as I have had frequent occasion to say, the stratum of workers who are governing is an inordinately,

incredibly *thin* one. We must secure help. According to all the signs, such a reserve is growing up within the country. There can not be the slightest doubt of the existence of a tremendous thirst for knowledge and of tremendous progress in education—mostly attained by means of extra school methods—of tremendous progress in educating the toiling masses. This progress cannot be confined within any school framework, but it is tremendous. All the signs go to show that this may result in a vast reserve in the near future, which will replace the representatives of the thin stratum of proletarians who have over exhausted themselves in the work. But in any case our present situation in this respect is an extremely difficult one. Bureaucracy has been defeated. The exploiters have been eliminated. But the cultural level has not been raised, and therefore the bureaucrats are occupying their old positions. They can be forced out only if the proletariat and the peasantry are organised far more widely than has hitherto been the case, and only if real measures are taken to enlist the workers in the work of government. You are all acquainted with such measures in the case of every People's Commissariat, and I will not dwell on them.

The last point I have to touch on is the question of *the leading role of the proletariat and disfranchisement*. Our constitution recognises the privileged position of the proletariat over the peasantry* and the disfranchisement of the exploiters. It was this that the pure democrats of Western Europe attacked most. We retorted, and retort that they have forgotten the most fundamental propositions of Marxism, they have forgotten that with them it is a case of bourgeois democracy, whereas we have passed to *proletarian* democracy. There is not a single country which has done a tenth of what the Soviet Republic has done in the past few months for the workers and the poor peasants in enlisting them in the work of administering the state. That is an absolute fact. Nobody will deny that in the matter of true, not paper, democracy, in the matter of enlisting the workers and peasants, we have done more than has been done or could be done by the best of the democratic republics in hundreds of years. It was this that determined the importance of the Soviets, it was owing to this that the Soviets have become a slogan for the proletariat of all countries.

But this in no way saves us from the fact that we are up against the inadequate culture of the masses. We do not regard the question of disfranchising the bourgeoisie from an absolute point of view, because it is theoretically quite conceivable that the dictatorship of the proletariat may suppress the bourgeoisie on every hand without disfranchising the bourgeoisie. This is theoretically quite conceivable. Nor do we advance our constitution as a model for other countries. All we say is that whoever conceives the transition to socialism without the suppression of the bourgeoisie is not a Socialist. But while it is essential to suppress the bourgeoisie as a class, it is not essential to deprive them of the suffrage and of equality. We do not want freedom for the bourgeoisie, we do not recognise equality of exploiters and exploited, but in the programme we treat this question from the standpoint that measures such as the inequality of workers and peasants are by no means prescribed by the constitution. They were embodied in the constitution *after* they were already in actual practice. It was not even the Bolsheviks who worked out the constitution of the Soviets, it was worked out against themselves by the Mensheviks and the Socialist Revolutionaries before the Bolshevik revolution. They worked it out in the way it had been worked out in practice. The organisation of the proletariat proceeded much more rapidly than the organisation of the peasantry, which fact made the workers the bulwark of the revolution and gave them a virtual privilege. The next task is gradually to pass from these privileges to their equalisation. Nobody drove the bourgeoisie out of the Soviets before the October Revolution and after the Bolshevik revolution *The bourgeois themselves left the Soviets*.

That is how the matter stands with the question of the franchise for the bourgeoisie. It is our task to put the question with absolute clarity. We do not in the least apologise for our conduct, but give an absolutely precise enumeration of the facts as they are. As we point out, our constitution was obliged to introduce this inequality because the cultural level was low and because with us organisation was weak. But we do not make this an ideal, on the contrary, in the programme the Party undertakes to work systematically for the abolition of this inequality between the more or

ganised proletariat and the peasantry, an inequality we shall have to abandon as soon as we succeed in raising the cultural level. We shall then be able to get along without these limitations. At present, after some seventeen months of revolution, these limitations are in practice already of very small importance.

These, comrades, are the main points on which I considered it necessary to dwell in the general discussion of the programme, in order to leave their further consideration to the discussion [*Applause*]

REPLY TO THE DISCUSSION ON THE PARTY PROGRAMME

*At the Eighth Congress of the Russian Communist
Party (Bolsheviks)*

*March 19, 1919*¹

COMRADES, I could not share this part of the question with Comrade Bukharin, after preliminary consultation, in such detail as in the case of the report. And perhaps there will even be no necessity to do so. It seems to me that the discussion which developed here in the main showed one thing: the absence of any definite and formulated counter-proposal. Many spoke about individual parts, desultorily, but there was no counter proposal. I shall dwell on the chief objections, which were mainly directed against the preamble. Comrade Bukharin told me that he belongs to the number of those who advocate the possibility of combining in the preamble a description of capitalism with a description of imperialism in one connected whole, but that, in the absence of such, we shall have to accept the existing draft.

Many of those who spoke advanced the point of view—it was advanced with particular emphasis by Comrade Podbelsky—that the draft in the form in which it has been presented to you is wrong. The arguments of Comrade Podbelsky were strange to a degree. For instance, that in point 1 the revolution is referred to as the revolution of such and such a date. That for some reason gave Comrade Podbelsky the idea that this is even revolution under a registered number. I can say that we in the Council of People's Commissars have to deal with very many documents with registered numbers and frequently get a little tired of them. But why transfer this impression here? And why indeed talk about a registered number here? We fix the day of the holiday and celebrate it. How

¹ See note to p. 311 *—Ed

can it be denied that it was precisely on November 7 (October 25) that power was seized? If you were to try to change this in any way, that would be artificial. If you call the revolution the October-November revolution, you make it possible to say that it was not accomplished in one day. But, of course, it took place over a longer period—not in October, not in November, and not even in one year. Comrade Podbelsky took exception to the fact that one of the paragraphs speaks of the *impending* social revolution. On this basis he depicted the programme almost as contempt of “His Majesty”—the Social Revolution. We are in the midst of the social revolution, and here they speak of it as impending? Such an argument is obviously groundless, because what is referred to in our programme is the social revolution on a world scale.

We are told that we approach the revolution from the economic standpoint. Is this necessary or not? Many over-enthusiastic comrades went so far as to talk of a world Sovnarkhoz,¹ and of subordinating all the national parties to the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party. Comrade Pyatakov almost went so far as to say that [*Pyatakov (from the body of the hall)* “*And do you think that would be a bad thing?*”]. Since he now remarks that it would not be a bad thing, I must reply that if there were anything like this in the programme, there would not even be any need to criticise it: the authors of such a proposal would have dug their own graves. These over-enthusiastic comrades have overlooked the fact that in the programme we must base ourselves on what actually exists. One of these comrades—I think it was Sumitsa, who very vigorously criticised the programme as a wretched one, and so forth—one of these over-enthusiastic comrades said that he cannot agree that it must contain what actually exists, and proposes that it should contain what does not exist [*Laughter*]. I think that owing to its obvious falsity this formulation legitimately arouses laughter. I did not say that there must be only what actually exists. I said that we must base ourselves on what has been absolutely established. We must say and prove to the proletarians and toiling peasants that the communist revolution

¹ Council of National Economy—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

is inevitable. Has anybody here said that it is unnecessary to say this? If anybody had attempted to make such a proposal he would have been shown that it is not so. Nobody has said or will say anything like that, because it is an undoubted fact that our Party came to power with the support not only of the Communist proletariat but also of the whole peasantry. Are we then to confine ourselves to telling these masses who are now marching with us, "It is the business of the Party only to carry on socialist construction. The communist revolution has been accomplished, it is for you to put communism into effect." Such a point of view is fundamentally unsubstantial, it is theoretically false. Our Party has absorbed directly, and still more indirectly, millions of people who are now beginning to understand the question of the class struggle, the question of the transition from capitalism to communism.

It may now be said—there will, of course, be no exaggeration in doing so—that nowhere, in no other country, have the toiling population so interested themselves in the question of transforming capitalism into socialism as in our country at the present day. They think about this in our country more than anywhere else. And is the Party not to give a reply to this question? We must demonstrate scientifically how this communist revolution will progress. In this connection all the other proposals are incomplete. Nobody wanted to delete this entirely. The talk was indefinite perhaps it could be cut down and the old programme not quoted because it is wrong. But if it was wrong, how is it that we could base ourselves on it in our work for so many years? Perhaps we shall have a common programme when the world Soviet republic is created, by then we shall probably have written several more programmes. But it would be premature to write it now when only one Soviet republic exists replacing the old Russian Empire. Even Finland, which is undoubtedly moving towards a Soviet republic, has not yet accomplished it—Finland, which is distinguished from all the other peoples that inhabited the former Russian Empire by her greater culture. So that to demand now that the programme should give a reflection of a finished process would be highly mistaken, It would be as though we were now to

advance a world Sovnarkhoz in the programme Yet, we ourselves have not been able to accustom ourselves to this ugly word "Sovnarkhoz", as for foreigners, it is said that there have been cases when they searched the time table for a station of that name [*Laughter*] We cannot decree such words on the whole world

To be an international programme, our programme must take account of the class factors which are economically characteristic of all countries It is characteristic of all countries that capitalism is still developing in a large number of places That is true of the whole of Asia, of all countries which are passing to bourgeois democracy it is true of a number of parts of Russia Comrade Rykov, who in the economic sphere knows the facts very well, told us of the new bourgeoisie which exists in our country That is true It is arising not only from among our Soviet government employees—to an insignificant degree it can arise from them also—it is arising from among the peasants and handicraftsmen, who have been liberated from the yoke of the capitalist banks and who are now cut off from railway transport That is a fact How do you expect to get around this fact? You are only flattering your illusions, or introducing badly digested booklearning into reality, which is far more complex It shows us that even in Russia capitalist commodity production is alive, operating, developing and giving birth to a bourgeoisie, just as in every capitalist society

Comrade Rykov said, "We are combating the bourgeoisie which is arising in our country because peasant economy has not yet disappeared, and this economy gives rise to a bourgeoisie and to capitalism" We do not know much about it, but that it is taking place is beyond doubt In all the world a Soviet republic so far exists only within the boundaries of the former Russian Empire It is growing and developing in a number of countries, but it does not yet exist in any other country Therefore to claim in our programme something we have not yet reached would be fantasy it would be a desire to escape unpleasant reality, which shows that the birth pangs of the socialist republics in other countries will undoubtedly be more severe than those we experienced It came to us easily because on November 9 (October 27), 1917, we legalised what the peasants demanded in the Socialist Revolutionary

resolutions This is not the case in any other country The Swiss comrade and the German comrade pointed out that the peasants took up arms against the strikers in Switzerland as never before, and that in Germany not even the slightest fresh breeze is to be felt in the rural districts as far as the appearance of Soviets of agricultural labourers and small peasants is concerned In our country, after the first few months of the revolution, the Soviets of Peasants' Deputies embraced almost the whole country We, a backward country, created them Here a gigantic problem arises, which the capitalist peoples have not yet solved And what sort of model capitalist nation are we? Up to 1917 we fell short as a model nation we still had relics of serfdom But not a single capitalistically constructed nation has yet shown how this problem is solved in practice We achieved power under exceptional conditions, when the oppression of tsarism made it necessary at one great lunge to accomplish a radical and rapid change, and in these exceptional conditions we were able for several months to lean on the support of the peasantry as a whole This is a historical fact As late as the summer of 1918, before the formation of the Committees of Poor Peasants, we held on as a power because we had the support of the peasantry as a whole This is impossible in any capitalist country And it is this fundamental economic fact that you are forgetting when you talk of a radical reconstruction of the whole programme Without this your programme will not rest on a scientific foundation

We are obliged to start from the Marxist thesis, recognised by all, that a programme must be built on a scientific foundation It must explain to the masses how the communist revolution arose, why it is inevitable, what is its significance, its essence, its power, and what problems it must solve Our programme must be a summary for agitational purposes a summary such as all programmes were, such as, for instance, the Erfurt Programme was Every paragraph of that programme contained hundreds of thousands of speeches and articles for agitators Every paragraph of our programme is something that every toiler must know assimilate and understand If he does not know what capitalism is, if he does not know that petty peasant and handicraft economy inevitably and

necessarily gives rise constantly to this capitalism—if he does not know this, even if he were a hundred times to declare himself a Communist and glitter with the most radical communism, that communism would not be worth a farthing, because we value communism only when it is based on economic facts

A good deal will be changed by the socialist revolution even in certain of the advanced countries. The capitalist method of production continues to exist in all parts of the world, often preserving its less developed forms, even though imperialism has assembled and concentrated finance capital. There is not a single developed country in which only capitalism in its most perfect form can be found. There is nothing like it even in Germany. When we were collecting material for our concrete tasks, the comrade in charge of the Central Statistical Bureau informed us that in Germany the peasant *concealed* from the food departments forty per cent of his potato surplus. In a capitalist state, where capitalism has reached full development, small peasant farms with free petty selling and petty profiteering continue to exist. Such facts must not be forgotten. Of the 300,000 members of the Party here represented are there many who fully understand this question? It would be ridiculous conceit to assume that since all this is known to us who have had the fortune to write the draft, the mass of Communists have come to understand it. No, they need this ABC. They need it a hundred times more than we do, because there can be no communism among people who have not grasped, who have not come to understand what communism is and what commodity production is. We come across these facts of petty commodity production every day, in every question of practical economic policy whether it be food or agriculture, or whether it concerns the Supreme Council of National Economy. And yet we are not to speak about this in the programme! If we did this we should only be showing that we are unable to solve this problem and that the success of the revolution in our country is to be explained by exceptional conditions.

Comrades come to visit us from Germany in order to get an idea of the forms of the socialist system. And we must act so as to prove our strength to the comrades from abroad, we must act so

that they may see that in our revolution we are in no way exceeding the bounds of reality, and so as to provide them with material that will be irrefutable for them. It would be absurd to represent our revolution as an ideal for all countries, to imagine that it has made a number of brilliant discoveries and has introduced a lot of socialist innovations. I have heard nobody say this, and I assert that we shall not hear it from anybody. We have had practical experience in accomplishing the first steps towards destroying capitalism in a country where a particular relation exists between the proletariat and the peasantry. Nothing more. If we behave like a frog and puff ourselves out, we shall make fools of ourselves in the eyes of the world and shall be mere braggarts.

We educated the Party of the proletariat on the Marxian programme, and the tens of millions of toilers we have in our country must be educated in the same way. We have gathered here as ideological leaders and must say to the masses, "We educated the proletariat and we always proceeded primarily from a precise economic analysis." This is not a task for a manifesto. The manifesto of the Third International is a call, a proclamation, it directs attention to what confronts us, it is an appeal to the sentiments of the masses.* Take the trouble to prove scientifically that you have an economic basis and that you are not building on sand. If you cannot do that, do not undertake to draw up a programme. And in order to do it, we must examine what we have lived through in these fifteen years, and nothing else. Does the fact that fifteen years ago we said that we were moving towards the social revolution, while now we have arrived at it, really weaken our position? It reinforces and strengthens our position. It all comes to this, that capitalism is passing into imperialism, and imperialism leads to the beginning of the socialist revolution. This is a tedious and lengthy process, and not a single capitalist country has yet passed through this process. But it is essential to refer to this process in the programme.

That is why the theoretical objections that have been made will not bear even the slightest criticism. I have no doubt that if we were to set ten or twenty writers, experienced in setting forth their ideas, to work for three or four hours a day, they would in the

course of a month draw up a better and more integral programme But to demand that this should be done in a day or two, as Comrade Podbelsky does, is ridiculous We worked not merely a day or two, or a couple of weeks I repeat that if it were possible to select a commission of thirty persons for a month and set them to work several hours a day, ay, and not allow them to be disturbed by telephone calls and news of the offensive, there can be no doubt that they would produce a programme five times better But nobody here has disputed essentials A programme which says nothing about the fundamentals of commodity production and capitalism will not be a Marxist international programme In order to be an international programme it is not enough that it should proclaim a world Soviet republic, or the abolition of nations, as Comrade Pyatakov proclaimed when he said Nations are not necessary, what is necessary is a union of the proletarians Of course, that is an excellent thing, and it will come to pass, but at an entirely different stage of communist development Comrade Pyatakov said with an obvious air of superiority, "You were backward in 1917 and you have progressed now" We progressed when we put into the programme what began to correspond with reality When we said that nations move from bourgeois democracy to proletarian government, we stated what was a fact, whereas in 1917 it was something you desired

When there will be that complete comradely confidence between the Spartacists and us that is needed for a united Communism, the comradely confidence that each day is in process of birth and which perhaps will come to be in a few months, it will be fixed in the programme But as long as it still does not exist, to proclaim it would be to drag them to something at which they have not yet arrived by their own experience We say that the Soviet type has achieved international significance Comrade Bukharin mentioned the British Shop Stewards' Committees That is not quite the Soviets They are growing, but they are still in embryo When they appear in the light of day, we shall see But to say that we are presenting the British workers with Russian Soviets will not bear the slightest criticism

Further, I must dwell on the question of the self determination

of nations This question has acquired an inflated significance in our criticism Here the weakness of our criticism was expressed in the fact that this question, which essentially plays a less than secondary part in the general structure of the programme, in the sum total of programme demands—this question has acquired a special significance in our criticism.

When Comrade Pyatakov spoke I wondered What is this, a discussion of the programme, or a dispute between two organisation bureaux? When Comrade Pyatakov said that the Ukrainian Communists act in accordance with the instructions of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party, I could not understand in what tone he was speaking Was it in a tone of regret? I do not suspect Comrade Pyatakov of that, but the idea of his speech was as follows What is the good of all this self determination when there is a fine Central Committee in Moscow? This is a childish point of view The Ukraine was separated from Russia by exceptional circumstances, and the national movement did not take deep root there In so far as it did manifest itself it was knocked out by the Germans This is a fact, but an exceptional fact. Even with the language there, the position is such that it has become uncertain whether the Ukrainian language is the mass language or not. The toiling masses of other nations were imbued with distrust for the Great Russians, as a kulak and oppressing nation That is a fact A Finnish representative told me that among the Finnish bourgeoisie, who hated the Great Russians, voices are to be heard saying, "The Germans turned out to be vile beasts, the Entente turned out to be vile beasts, we had better have the Bolsheviks" This is a tremendous victory we have gained over the Finnish bourgeoisie in the national question This in no way prevents us from fighting it as a class enemy, selecting suitable methods for the purpose. The Soviet Republic, which has been formed in a country whose tsarism used to oppress Finland, must declare that it respects the right of nations to independence We concluded a treaty with the Red Finnish government, which existed for a short time, we consented to make certain territorial concessions, on account of which I have heard not a few purely chauvinistic objections, such as, "There are excellent fisheries

there, and you have surrendered them " These are the kind of objections of which I have said Scratch some Communists and you will find Great Russian chauvinists

It seems to me that this example of Finland, and of the Bashkirs, shows that in the national question you cannot argue that economic unity is necessary at all costs Of course it is necessary! But we must endeavour to secure it by propaganda, by agitation, by a voluntary alliance The Bashkirs distrust the Great Russians because the Great Russians are more cultured and used their culture to rob the Bashkirs That is why in these remote places the name Great Russian for the Bashkir is tantamount to oppressor, swindler This must be reckoned with, it must be combated But, after all, this is a prolonged process You cannot eliminate it by a decree, you know In this matter we have to be very cautious Caution is particularly necessary on the part of a nation like the Great Russian nation, which aroused furious hatred among all the other nations and we have only now learnt to correct the situation and that badly For instance, there are in the Commissariat of Education, or connected with the Commissariat of Education, Communists who say There is a unified school and therefore don't dare to teach in any language but Russian! In my opinion such a Communist is a Great Russian chauvinist He lurks in many of us, he must be combated

That is why we must declare to the other nations that we are out and out internationalists and are striving for a voluntary union of the workers and peasants of all nations This in no way precludes wars War is another question, and arises out of the very nature of imperialism If we are fighting Wilson, and Wilson makes a small nation his instrument, we say that we shall oppose this instrument We have never declared ourselves against this We have never said that a socialist republic can exist without military force War may be a necessity under certain conditions But now the essence of the question of self determination is that various nations are following a similar historical road, but by zigzags and footpaths differing extremely, and that the more cultured nations are obviously moving in a different way from the less cultured nations Finland moved in a different way Germany

is moving in a different way Comrade Pyatakoy is right a thousand times when he says that we need unity But we must strive for it by means of propaganda, by Party influence, by the creation of united trade unions However, here too we cannot act in one stereotyped way Just try to extend this to Germany now! We have conquered the trade union movement, but the German comrades say, "In our country the leaders in all the trade unions are so yellow that our slogan is to liquidate the trade unions" We tell them, "You have national peculiarities, you are absolutely right" If we suppressed this point, or formulated it in a different way, we should be deleting the national question from the programme This might be done if there were people without national peculiarities But such people do not exist, and we cannot build a socialist society in any other way

I think, comrades, that the programme proposed here should be accepted as a basis and submitted to the commission, which should be supplemented by representatives from the opposition, or rather from comrades who have here made businesslike proposals, and that the commission should decide on 1) the amendments to the draft enumerated and 2) the theoretical objections on which no agreement is possible I think that this would be the most businesslike way to put the matter, one which would lead to a correct decision in the quickest possible way [*Applause*]

EXPLANATORY NOTES

EXPLANATORY NOTES

PAGE 3 * The article "Economics and Politics in the Era of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat" was written on the occasion of the second anniversary of the October Revolution and was published in the *Communist International* No 6, on the day of the second anniversary, November 7, 1919. According to the time at which it was written and published it belongs roughly to the middle of the period of War Communism, and its reproduction in this place in the present volume represents a certain departure from the chronological arrangement of the works of Lenin. It is placed at the beginning of the volume on "The Period of War Communism" in order that the basic propositions it contains may serve as a guide to the study of all Lenin's works belonging to this period. The article "Economics and Politics in the Era of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat" is not specially devoted to the period of War Communism. It lays down certain basic principles and deals with the main aspects of economic and class relationships in the transition period and with the principal aims of the proletarian dictatorship and its path towards communism based on the experience gained in the two years of the dictatorship in Soviet Russia. Describing the transition period as a period of struggle between moribund capitalism and nascent communism" and the policy of the party of the proletariat in this period as a policy of class struggle for the destruction of classes and the building of a classless socialist society, and indicating the main lines and landmarks of this struggle the article "Economics and Politics in the Era of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat" in this respect is directly related to the article "Left Wing Childishness and Petty Bourgeois Mentality, *Selected Works*, Vol VII

PAGE 5 * Lenin is referring to the Decree on the Land adopted on the basis of his report by the Second Congress of Soviets on November 8 (October 26), 1917, the day following the seizure of power by the proletariat. This decree is given in full in the "Decree on the Land" of November 8 (October 26), 1917, *Selected Works* Vol VI

PAGE 10 * The dispersal of the Constituent Assembly, the majority of which consisted of Right Socialist Revolutionaries and which refused to recognise the October Revolution, the dictatorship of the proletariat and the power of the Soviets, took place on January 20 (7), 1918. The attitude of Lenin and the Party to the Constituent Assembly and the motives for its dispersal will be found in the "Theses on the Constituent Assembly" and in the speech

and the decor* on "The Dissolution of the Constituent Assembly *Selected Works* Vol VI while the details of the dispersal are given in the note to p 447* of that volume

PAGE 13 * Lenin is evidently referring to the chapter Morality and Law Equality in Engels *Anti Dühring* The following passage in particular resembles Lenin's formulation The real content of the proletarian demand for equality is the demand for the *abolition of classes* Lenin's reference to a cast from the relations of commodity production evidently refers to the following passage from this same chapter of *Anti Dühring* the equality and equal status of all human labour, because and in so far as it is *human* labour, found its unconscious but clearest expression in the law of value of modern bourgeois economics In the preliminary MS of *Anti Dühring*, Engels made the following emendation in the margin, referring to the corresponding passage in *Capital* 'The idea of equality [follows] from the equality of general human labour in the production of commodities'

PAGE 14 * The letter entitled The Famine addressed to the workers of Petrograd, was written on May 22, 1918 and published in *Pravda* of May 24 (No 101)—a month prior to the report delivered to the Fourth Conference of Trade Unions and Factory Committees of Moscow on the same subject which is reproduced in *Selected Works* Vol VII The main propositions contained in this letter are the same as those of the report But particular stress was laid on the argument that the fight for bread was the fight for socialism and that the workers, entering on this fight as a crusade' as a *determined battle against capitalism must rally the poor peasants and rely on them in the fight against the rural rich, the kulak, the parasite* The letter was written at a time when the class struggle had assumed an acute form—the eve of the imperialist intervention, which began in June, and the new outbreak of the civil war It preceded the period of War Communism but in a brief and vivid form it laid down the guiding principles in the fight against the famine in the fight for bread, which in the main retained their validity during the whole period of War Communism, as is borne out by the article Everybody on Food and Transport Work! which follows in this volume For this reason it is reproduced here

The important part played by the appeals of Lenin and the Party to the working class to undertake a struggle for bread is generally known And the workers of Petrograd, followed by the workers of other cities, organised the "crusade But while fighting for bread, while organising the poor peasants and welding them together (in the Committees of Poor Peasants in the summer of 1918) they at the same time under the guidance of the Party and the Soviet government performed a tremendously important work in smashing the kulaks and effecting the socialist revolution in the countryside In this manner they paved the way for victory in the civil war and for the preservation and consolidation of the proletarian dictatorship

PAGE 22 * The appeal *Everybody on Food and Transport Work!* was written at the end of January 1919 and published in *Pravda* on January 28 No 19 It focused the attention of the Party and the working class on these two questions, the central questions of the period of the civil war Food and transport were the gravest problems of the period of the armed struggle against the counter revolution of the bourgeoisie and the landlords Lenin called for a supreme display of energy in overcoming these difficulties by means of the mass mobilisation of the proletarians for work on these two most dangerous sections of the class war front and by transferring to these sections the best of the forces engaged in other spheres of work

PAGE 22 ** Owing to the famine and economic disruption, typhus spread rapidly in the winter of 1919 and 1920 It was carried into Soviet Russia from the war fronts by the bag traders The epidemic was particularly virulent in the rear of the White Guard fronts—Denikin in the Ukraine and the Crimea and Kolchak in the Urals and Siberia

PAGE 22 *** Ufa was captured from Kolchak on December 31 1918 The Red Army cleared Orenburg of Kolchak's troops on January 21 1919

The victories in the South here referred to consisted in the successful liquidation of Krasnov's White Guard detachments by the Red Army, the advance into the Don region and the capture of the city of Lugansk on January 21 1919

The success of the Soviet uprising in the Ukraine and the capture of Kharkov by the Red Army on January 3, 1919, were in part facilitated by the evacuation of the German troops from the Ukraine necessitated by the revolution in Germany in November 1918

PAGE 26 * The Eighth Party Congress, held March 18-23, 1919 met at a time when the first phase of the intervention by the direct forces of the imperialist armies and the agents of imperialism within the country was practically at an end The revolution in Germany converted the Brest Treaty into a scrap of paper, and at the same time rendered intervention more difficult for the imperialists and created a certain respite for Soviet Russia. At the same time a number of countries in Western Europe were swept by a wave of proletarian uprisings, which again placed the immediate struggle for the proletarian dictatorship on the order of the day in those countries The peculiar features of this moment in the Russian and world proletarian revolutions which made it possible for the Eighth Party Congress to tackle questions of development and organisation, were described by Lenin in his opening speech at this congress (Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol XXIV, Speech at the Opening of the Congress, March 18')

The Eighth Congress (for an appreciation of which see Lenin's concluding speech pp 45-49 in this volume) laid down a number of important principles of Party policy the scope of which extended beyond the period of War

Communism and the full force of which was retained during the whole period of transition from capitalism to socialism. They embraced the questions of the Party programme, attitude towards the middle peasants, attitude towards experts and the building up of the Red Army. These were the principal questions dealt with by the Eighth Party Congress. Lenin delivered a separate report on the question of the Party programme (pp. 335-56 in this volume) which figured as a special item on the agenda and this question was not dealt with in the report of the Central Committee. The question of the middle peasants was covered by a special point on the agenda, 'Work in the Rural Districts', on which Lenin also delivered a separate report (pp. 166-83 in this volume). Accordingly in the report of the Central Committee, Lenin dealt with this fundamental tactical question of the Eighth Congress in the most general terms, discussing only its underlying principles. All he did was somewhat to develop the propositions laid down by him in the speech opening the congress dealing with them subsequently in full detail in his speech on work in the rural districts. In the speech opening the congress, Lenin considered it necessary to lay special stress on the fact that one of the most difficult tasks of communist development in a country of small peasantry must now face us: *it is the question of our attitude towards the middle peasantry* and he went on to say that "we have entered a stage of socialist development in which we must draw up concrete and detailed rules and instructions, tested by the experience of work in the rural districts, by which we must be guided in order to adopt in relation to the middle peasantry a position of firm alliance, to preclude the possibility of those repeatedly occurring deviations and errors which repelled the middle peasant from us" (Our italics.—Ed.). He thus proposed to the congress as a practical task of the day that an alliance should be effected with the middle peasant, while relying on the poor peasant and not for a moment ceasing the struggle against the kulak—the alliance which he had already proposed in July 1918 and which he had recommended in a striking form in November of that year in his article 'Valuable Admissions' by Plitirm Sorokin (pp. 144-53 in this volume). As in this article so in the report of the Central Committee Lenin intimately associates this question with the fight against the kulak. In this report the reader will find Lenin's statement to the effect that Engels' expectation that it might be possible 'to manage without adopting repressive measures against the big peasant as well' was *not justified* in Russia. Lenin goes on to say 'that *we were and are and will be in a state of open civil war with the kulaks. That is inevitable*' (Our italics.—Ed.). This passage is a blow at the Right opportunist theory of the 'growth of the kulaks into socialism' and presents a general perspective of the attitude of the proletariat to the kulaks for the whole period of the proletarian dictatorship, as expressed in the idea that the fight against the kulaks must not be discontinued for a single moment.

Equally important and as profoundly significant for the subsequent period of socialist construction in the Soviet Union, for the fight against Trotskyism and the aftermath of Trotskyism—the Leftism of 1928-31 and the 'Left

aberrations in practical work in the rural districts—is the fact that at the Eighth Congress Lenin associated his advocacy of the fight against the kulaks with his warning about the necessity of precluding 'the possibility of those deviations and errors which repelled the middle peasant, in particular as a result of transferring to him 'blows intended for the kulaks' "

The question of the Red Army, which from the point of view of the practical problems of the defence of the country, was of tremendous significance during the period of War Communism was placed by Lenin on a high theoretical level. Lenin regarded the development of the Red Army as one of the most important tasks of the proletarian revolution at a time when the disintegration and dissolution of the old imperialist armies had become an international phenomenon. We proceeded from experiment to experiment, Lenin said we endeavoured to create a volunteer army, feeling our way testing the ground and experimenting how the problem could be solved in the given situation. Lenin considered that the task of dispelling the inclination to guerilla tactics in the development of the Red Army and the policy of utilising the latest achievements in the science and art of war followed from the fact that the country of the dictatorship of the proletariat would for a long time be surrounded by capitalist countries. Since 'a series of frightful collisions between the Soviet Republic and the bourgeois states will be inevitable' the working class must prove its capacity to rule by its military organisation. According to Lenin building up the Red Army implied 'combining the enthusiasm and the new revolutionary creative spirit with the employment of the stock of bourgeois science and military technique in its worst form, without which it is incapable of mastering the modern technique and the modern methods of conducting war'.

A practical expression of this combination was the utilisation of bourgeois military experts in the development of the Red Army. Lenin even points out that it was in the Red Army that the proletarian dictatorship was first confronted with the question of experts, a question dealt with in the programme of the Party. Lenin therefore in his report dealt with this problem not only as a military problem, but as a problem affecting all the tasks of socialist construction. Attention must be drawn to Lenin's profound class and revolutionary approach to the question of bourgeois experts. He demanded that they should be utilised, that the necessary conditions for their utilisation should be created, that confidence should be shown in them when they scrupulously fulfilled the work entrusted to them and that no expert baiting should be permitted, but at the same time that there should not be even the slightest possibility of the interests of proletarian policy being subordinated to bourgeois aspirations and the professional interests of the experts. He stressed the importance of active proletarian guidance and the exercise of vigilant control over the bourgeois experts, for the bourgeois experts "betrayed us and will continue to betray us for many years to come."

The policy of Lenin and the Party towards the bourgeois experts is treated at greater length in the note to p. 348* of this volume.

PAGE 26 ** The conference on the Prinkipo Islands in the Sea of Marmora was proposed by America and Great Britain for the purpose of settling the 'Russian Question' by means of an agreement between the Soviet government and the White Guard governments then occupying Russian territory. The proposal was made to the Soviet government by radio on January 23, 1919. In its note of February 4, the Soviet government consented to the conference. However, the governments of Kolchak, Denikin and of other White Guards rejected the invitation, and the conference was therefore never held.

PAGE 27 * *The July defeats*—the days of July 16-18 (July 3-5, Old Style) 1917 when in connection with the temporary resignation of the Constitutional Democrats from the Provisional Government, the masses of the workers and soldiers of Petrograd demonstrated in the streets under the slogan of 'All power to the Soviets', and called upon the Central Executive Committee of the Soviets to take political power. For two days armed mass demonstrations took place in Petrograd. The demonstrations were of a peaceful character, but the Provisional Government called out troops which fired on the demonstrators and this led to armed conflicts. On the evening of July 18, counter-revolutionary military units arrived in Petrograd from the front and suppressed the movement. House to house searches were made, many Bolsheviks were arrested and the editorial and printing offices of *Pravda* were wrecked. The July days were followed by a period of actual counter-revolutionary dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. This dictatorship was exercised through the medium of the military clique operating under the protection of the Kerensky government and the leaders of the Soviets and of the Socialist Revolutionary and Menshevik parties headed by Tseretelli and Chernov, who, as Lenin said at that time, 'had definitely betrayed the cause of the revolution by placing it in the hands of the counter-revolutionaries and transforming themselves, their parties and the Soviets into figleaves for the counter-revolution' (*Collected Works*, Vol. XXI 'The Political Situation'). The July days marked the turning point in the revolution, they marked the end of the dual power and of the "peaceful period of the revolution. From that moment the immediate task became to prepare the Party, the workers and the masses of the soldiers for the violent seizure of power by the proletariat, for the armed uprising. In this connection the treachery of the Soviets, which were then led by the Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries, their transformation into 'figleaves' of the bourgeois counter-revolution, led to the Bolsheviks temporarily withdrawing the slogan 'All power to the Soviets' until the Bolshevik Party had won the Soviets and transformed them into organs of the struggle for the power of the proletariat, into organs of insurrection. For Lenin's appraisal of the July events and the political situation that arose after them see the article 'On Slogans' in *Selected Works*, Vol. VI.

PAGE 27 ** By the Kornilov revolt is meant the attempt to bring about a bourgeois counter-revolution for the purpose of establishing the military dictator.

ship of General Kornilov. The plot to bring about this counter revolution was organised by the tsarist generals led by Kornilov, at that time Commander in Chief of the forces the Constitutional Democratic Party and the upper stratum of the commercial and industrial bourgeoisie. The plot failed owing to the fact that the Bolshevik Party succeeded in widely mobilising against it the masses of the workers and soldiers, which, in turn, caused the compromising petty bourgeoisie, led by Kerensky, to waver. The military units which Kornilov withdrew from the front in order to attack Petrograd (the Cossack Corps and the so called Savage Division) never reached Petrograd. They became demoralised on the way. Under the pressure of the masses the Kerensky government was compelled to declare Kornilov a traitor and arrest him (soon after Kornilov escaped). For Kornilovism and the tactics to be used in fighting it see Lenin's 'A letter to the Central Committee of the RSDLP' in *Selected Works* Vol VI.

PAGE 29 * Lenin is referring to the proletarian revolution in Finland at the beginning of 1918, the proletarian revolution and short lived Soviet power in Latvia in January 1919, the development of the Soviet movement in Germany at the end of 1918 and the beginning of 1919 (the First National Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies of Germany was held December 17-25), the January uprising of the German workers, the street fighting in Berlin in March and the Soviet revolution brewing in Hungary (news of the formation of a Soviet Republic in Hungary was received at the time of the Eighth Congress of the Russian Communist Party). Furthermore, it was at the beginning of 1919 that the union of Communist forces on a world scale took place at the First Congress of the Communist International held March 2-7 1919.

PAGE 30 * The reference is to an article by Hilferding which appeared in the organ of the German Independent Social Democrats (Kautskians) *Freiheit* February 9, 1919, in which he proposed a combination by legislative means of the Soviet system and bourgeois parliamentarism. Prior to that Kautsky in this same paper had proposed that the Soviets be retained as economic bodies, but not as state bodies. On February 11, Hilferding's proposal was adopted by the Independents and published in the form of a manifesto. On August 11, the National Assembly introduced a clause into the Constitution of the German Republic "legitimising" the Soviets of Workers' Deputies and conferring on them the right to discuss trade union and economic questions.

A criticism of Kautsky's and Hilferding's opportunist proposal to combine the Soviets with bourgeois parliamentarism was given by Lenin in his 'Theses and Report on Bourgeois Democracy and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat' (*Selected Works* Vol VII) and in the article 'The Heroes of the Berne International' (*Collected Works* Vol XXIV).

PAGE 32 * Lenin is evidently referring here to the following passage in Engels' preface, written in 1891, to Marx's *Civil War in France*.

But what is still more wonderful is the correctness of so much that was actually done by the Commune composed as it was of Blanquists and Proud honists. Naturally the Proudhonists were chiefly responsible for the economic decrees of the Commune both for their praiseworthy and their unpraise worthy aspects as the Blanquists were for its political actions and omissions. And in both cases the irony of history willed—as is usual when doctrinaires come to the helm—that both did the opposite of what the doctrines of their school prescribed.

PAGE 32 ** The reference is to the meeting of the Central Committee of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party (Bolsheviks) held on October 2, (10), 1917. Lenin attended this meeting and made a report on the current situation. The resolution on armed insurrection proposed by Lenin (for the text of which see *Selected Works* Vol VI) was adopted by ten votes against two (Kamenev and Zinoviev). From this moment began the October strike breaking of Zinoviev and Kamenev. On the following day they handed in their capitulatory declaration to the Central Committee, protesting against the decision it had adopted, and then came out against it in the petty bourgeois press (*Novaya Zhizn*). For further particulars on this question, see *Selected Works*, Vol VI, notes to p 303 * p 304 *

PAGE 33 * The Berne Conference of the Second International took place in February 1919, and was the first International conference of the socialists to be called after the war. It was convened for the purpose of restoring the Second International. Ninety-eight delegates were present from various countries, including representatives of the Kautskian Centrists. Delegates of the Independent Social Democratic Party of Germany, with Kautsky at their head, were also present. The conference bore a strongly marked chauvinist character and wholly adhered to the position of serving the imperialist bourgeoisie in the fight against the proletarian revolution. It tried to fix responsibility for the war and granted "mutual amnesty" to both belligerent sides and to the Socialist Parties of both sides. On the colonial question it adopted a resolution moved by Kautsky in which the exploitation of the colonies by the imperialists was declared to be inevitable and only needing mitigation. On the question of labour protection laws the conference decided to take part in a conference that was to be convened by the capitalists and the governments of the Entente. It was only owing to the protest of the opposition group (numbering twenty delegates) that this conference rejected a resolution moved by Kautsky, Bernstein and the representatives of the Russian Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries, condemning the proletarian revolution and by that openly taking the side of imperialist intervention and internal counter-revolution in Soviet Russia.

PAGE 34 * The slogan of workers' control of social production and consumption was one of the most important Bolshevik slogans, and had been formu-

lated in Lenin's famous April Theses in 1917 Lenin explained the significance of workers' control in particular detail in his pamphlet *The Threatening Catastrophe and How To Fight It* Speaking of the fundamental and principal means of preventing economic catastrophe and famine, Lenin wrote "This means is control supervision accounting, state regulation the establishment of a correct distribution of labour forces in the production and distribution of products, husbanding the resources of the people, elimination of any waste of forces the utmost economy Control supervision, accounting—this in the first word in the fight against catastrophe and famine (*Collected Works* Vol XXI) Among the most important measures that were to accompany the introduction of workers control Lenin then proposed the following 1) the nationalisation of the banks 2) the nationalisation of the sugar, coal oil and metallurgical syndicates 3) the abolition of commercial secrets, 4) the compulsory amalgamation of manufacturers, merchants, etc., into syndicates, and 5) the compulsory amalgamation of the population in consumers' co-operative societies Lenin regarded the fundamental condition for effective workers control to be political power in the hands of the proletariat Thus, workers control was one of the slogans of the proletarian revolution and in this revolution it was to serve as a transitional measure towards the socialisation of production towards transferring industry from the hands of the capitalists to the hands of the proletarian state and the transformation of private capitalist trade into the state and co-operative organisation of exchange and distribution the forms of which were to be determined in the subsequent progress of the revolution in accordance with the concrete conditions of the class struggle and of socialist construction

Soon after the October Revolution on November 27 (14), 1917 the All Russian Central Executive Committee adopted, and later put into operation a decree on workers control which was based on Lenin's draft of the statutes of this decree For the text of this draft see Lenin's Draft Statutes on Workers Control in *Selected Works*, Vol VI, and the corresponding explanatory notes

The capitalists expressed great hostility to Lenin's "Draft Statutes on Workers' Control" Thus, in the resolutions adopted by representatives of the All Russian Commercial and Industrial Organisations and of the Petrograd Manufacturers Association on December 6 (November 23), 1917, employers were advised to close their enterprises in the event of a demand being made for the introduction of workers' control

PAGE 35 * At the end of 1918 the demand that the old trade unions which were under the control of reformist socialists should be abandoned became very popular among the German Communists It was advocated with particular vigour by the group of "Lefts" who had split off from the German Communist Party to form the Communist Labour Party of Germany They carried on propaganda in favour of a "General Labour Union" for the purpose of organising the revolutionary elements among the working class For a criti

cism of these views see Lenin's pamphlet *Left Wing' Communism, an Infantile Disorder*, chaps V and VI.

PAGE 37 * Lenin's statement that the Russian Revolution down to the summer and even the autumn of 1918 was to a large extent a *bourgeois revolution* and that in that revolution it fell to the lot of the proletariat to serve as the agent of a petty bourgeois revolution must be understood only as meaning that the proletariat, in effecting the *proletarian socialist revolution*, at the same time (in passing) solved the problems of the bourgeois democratic "general peasant revolution against the landlords."

This subject is treated by Lenin in greater detail in his *Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky* (*Selected Works*, Vol VII) *The Third International and Its Place in History* (*Selected Works*, Vol X), *The Anniversary of the Revolution* and *'The Fourth Anniversary of the October Revolution'* (*Selected Works* Vol VI) and in a number of other works, and also by Stalin in *'The Three Basic Slogans of the Party on the Peasant Question (Reply to Comrade Yan-sky)'* and *'The Slogan of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat and the Poorest Peasantry in the Period of Preparation for October (Reply to Comrade S Pokrovsky)'* (*Stalin Leninism*)

PAGE 39 * Lenin is referring to the following passage in his *Report on the Petty Bourgeois Parties* delivered at a meeting of Party workers in Moscow on November 27, 1918

I should like first of all to remind you of the way the basic propositions of Marxism regarding the attitude of the proletariat to the middle peasantry were evolved. In order to recall this to you I shall read certain statements made by Engels in his *'Peasant Question in France and Germany'*. This article, which appeared in pamphlet form was written in 1895 or 1894. This is what Engels said at that time regarding the attitude of the proletariat: 'What is our attitude toward the small peasant? Firstly, the proposal of the French programme is absolutely correct. We foresee the inevitable destruction of the small peasantry, but it is not our mission to eliminate it by our interference. And, secondly, it is equally evident that when we possess the state power, we shall not think of forcibly expropriating the small peasants—with or without compensation, that is immaterial—as we are obliged to do in the case of the large landowners. Our task with relation to the small peasants is primarily to transform their private production and property into co-operative production and property, not by coercion, but by dint of example and by offering public assistance for this purpose. On this same subject Engels further said: 'We can never promise the small peasant to back his individual farm and individual property against the superior forces of capitalist production. All we can promise him is that we shall not against his will and by force interfere in his economic relations. And, finally, the last utterance of which I should like to remind you concerns his thoughts on the rich peasants, the big peasants, or, to put it in a Russian way, the kulaks, in other words, the peasants who cannot get along without employing wage labour. In a socialist society, Marxists can do nothing for these peasants. If these peasants come to realise the inevitable failure of their present mode of

production and draw the necessary conclusions therefrom, let them come over to us and it will be our duty to ease their adoption of the new form of production in every possible way. Otherwise we must leave them to their fate (Lenin, Collected Works Vol XXIII)

If he examines Engels' pamphlet the reader will find that after the passages cited by Lenin Engels goes on to speak of the big peasants (kulaks), of whom he says that in all probability here too we shall abstain from forcible expropriation but incidentally, we shall hope that economic development will render even these hard heads accessible to good sense.

As Lenin goes on to say, these assumptions of Engels regarding the kulaks were not justified in the case of the Russian revolution even in its earliest stages. And the subsequent development of the revolution down to the contemporary stage, marked by the frenzied resistance of the kulak to the socialist reconstruction of agriculture only served to confirm Lenin's statement. The slogan of the liquidation of the kulaks as a class on the basis of universal collectivisation, which was advanced by Stalin after the year of great change and the application of this slogan by the Party in the period of the First Five Year Plan consummate the policy laid down by Lenin for the Party in relation to the kulak who is a most bitter and irreconcilable foe of socialism.

PAGE 45 * The reference is to Kolchak's offensive on the Eastern front, begun on March 6 and the advance of the Polish troops, who had roughly reached the Baranowicz line at the time of the Eighth Congress.

PAGE 47 * On October 31, 1918 as a consequence of the imperialist war the defeat of Germany Austria Hungary and Turkey the internal disintegration of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy and the growing revolutionary activities of the workers and soldiers, Hungary threw off the rule of the Austrian monarchy and proclaimed itself an independent national republic. The power passed into the hands of the radical parties, the petty bourgeois and the Social Democratic parties, which set up a coalition government headed by Count Karolyi. The chief purpose of this government was with the help of the Social Democratic party and trade union apparatus, and in the interests of the bourgeoisie, to disarm and suppress the revolutionary movement of the proletariat and the poor peasants, the mainsprings of the growing socialist revolution. But the movement of the masses grew increasingly menacing to the bourgeoisie, particularly after the formation of the Hungarian Communist Party on November 21, 1918. The latter was able in the course of three months to assume the leadership of the spontaneous movement of the proletarian masses and to turn it into a conscious struggle for the power of the Soviets. The rapidly growing influence of the Communist Party induced the coalition government on February 21, 1919, to arrest the leaders of the Hungarian Communist Party and to close down the Communist newspapers. But this measure only served to attract the workers more powerfully to the Com

munist Party At the same time, the petty bourgeois coalition government suffered utter defeat in the sphere of both foreign and domestic policy With the consent and support of the Entente two thirds of the territory of Hungary were occupied by Rumanian, Czecho-Slovakian and Yugo-Slavian troops The central and most industrialised part of the country was deprived of its sources of raw materials and fuel In February and March the efforts of the government proved in many places inadequate to restrain the masses from spontaneously socialising the large estates and industrial enterprises In March also, Colonel Vix, the representative of the Entente, demanded in the name of the latter the cession to Rumania and Czecho-Slovakia of further territories, territories almost exclusively inhabited by Hungarians Impotent in the face of both the growing revolution and the Entente, the government resigned The Social Democrats decided to come to an agreement with the Communist Party, whose influence among the working class masses was growing from day to day Agreement was reached on March 21, in the Budapest prison, where the arrested leaders of the Communist Party were confined On the basis of this agreement a dictatorship of the proletariat was proclaimed that very same day and measures were immediately taken to organise a Soviet government, to socialise the means of production and exchange and to prepare for the defence of the Hungarian Soviet Republic by the creation of a revolutionary Red Army Simultaneously, and also in accordance with the terms of the agreement, the Communist Party was completely amalgamated with the Social Democratic Party to form the united Socialist (subsequently Socialist Communist) Party of Hungary This was a serious error on the part of the Hungarian Communists, for in effect it deprived the proletarian revolution in Hungary of the leadership of the proletarian Communist Party and tied the hands of the Communists As far as the Social Democrats were concerned, this amalgamation, like the agreement with the Communists generally, was a dexterous manoeuvre designed to weaken both the Communist Party and the proletarian dictatorship, which the Social Democrats had so hypocritically recognised, and to disintegrate them from within To betray the revolution, under the guise of recognising the proletarian dictatorship and coming to an agreement with the Communists, was the motive that underlay the actions of the Social Democrats, who, with the Communists, occupied the high posts in the new Hungarian Soviet Republic This betrayal was one of the chief reasons for the collapse of the Hungarian Soviet Republic "A number of articles in the Vienna *Rote Fahne*, the central organ of the Austrian Communist Party," Lenin said, "have revealed one of the chief reasons for this collapse: the treachery of the 'Socialists, who, in word, came over to the side of Bela Kun and declared themselves to be Communists, yet actually did not pursue a policy consonant with the dictatorship of the proletariat, but vacillated, showed the white feather deserted to the bourgeoisie and in part directly sabotaged the proletarian revolution and betrayed it The world powerful bandits of imperialism (i.e., the bourgeois governments of England, France, etc.), who had surrounded the

Hungarian Soviet Republic were able, of course to take advantage of these vacillations *within* the government of the Hungarian Soviet power and brutally suppressed it with the help of the Rumanian executioners." (*Collected Works*, Vol. XXV, 'Notes of a Publicist')

The central guiding organ of the Soviet power was the Revolutionary Council, consisting of the People's Commissars—representative of the Social Democrats and the Communists—under the chairmanship of the Left Social Democrat, A. Garbai. Bela Kun held the post of People's Commissar of Foreign Affairs, but he virtually became the head of the Soviet government. In spite of the participation of the Social Democrats in the Soviet government the Communists in Soviet Hungary managed to socialise all the large and middle sized, and in part even the small, industrial, trading, banking and transport enterprises and all educational and medical institutions, at the head of which were placed Soviet Commissars, mostly working men. Factory councils, with extensive powers, were organised in the enterprises. A number of measures adopted by the Soviet government secured the workers higher wages, improved housing conditions and more comprehensive social insurance. A great deal of attention was devoted to serving the cultural needs of the masses.

But, in addition to the gross mistake of liquidating the independent Communist Party, the Communists committed another gross error with regard to the peasants. On April 4, 1919, the Soviet government issued a decree socialising all estates exceeding one hundred *jochs* and transferring them to "producers co-operatives," organised from among the agricultural workers employed on the estates. The management of the producers co-operatives was entrusted to 'production commissars' (these commissars were frequently former landlords or stewards). No measures were taken to satisfy the land hunger of the poor and middle peasants of Hungary, and this served to repel the peasant masses from the proletarian revolution and to reinforce the counter-revolutionary influence of the kulaks over these masses. The peasants not only refused to sell their products for the paper money issued by the Soviet government, but in certain places became involved in the open counter-revolutionary actions and revolts of the kulaks, which were usually led by the officials and the clergy. The supply of food to the cities was almost entirely discontinued and only by the most intense effort was it possible to ensure the industrial workers the minimum of necessities. This circumstance considerably facilitated the organisation of a counter-revolutionary movement by the Hungarian bourgeoisie and landlords and their aids and abettors—the Social Democrats, represented by the trade union bureaucrats and petty bourgeois intellectuals. During the entire existence of the Soviet government, the Social Democratic bureaucrats retained their high posts in the Party, Soviet, and particularly trade union apparatuses converting the latter into centres of anti-Soviet agitation. The local Soviets were elected on a territorial instead of a production principle and therefore could not become bodies directly based on the working class masses in the mills and factories.

The reformist trade union apparatus was the only organisation possessing direct and well organised contact with the industrial proletarian masses every where. Taking advantage of every difficulty experienced by the proletarian revolution, and particularly the food difficulties, the reformist trade union bureaucrats worked zealously for the abolition of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The result was that Social Democratic "defeatism" gradually penetrated to the ranks of the workers and contributed largely to weaken the activities of the organs of Soviet government and the Red Army.

The counter revolutionary movement began to become particularly active in June when, in addition to the organisation of sabotage by the petty bourgeois intellectuals in the Soviet institutions, the counter revolutionaries began to organise armed action. On June 24 a counter revolutionary revolt broke out in the Hungarian capital—Budapest. The principal armed force of the revolt consisted of army cadets. Monitors appeared on the Danube flying the white flag, and bombarded the headquarters of the Soviets. One of the two telephone stations was seized by the Whites. The revolt was liquidated in twenty four hours after severe and bloody street fighting. But the Hungarian proletariat found itself obliged to carry on the organisation of the Soviet government and to undertake the socialist reconstruction of the national economy on the reduced territory of Hungary not only in the midst of a bitter struggle against internal difficulties and foes, but also in the face of foreign aggression—the economic boycott and the intervention organised by the Entente with the help of Rumania and Czecho-Slovakia. The Rumanian and Czecho-Slovakian troops began their attack on Soviet Hungary on April 17. The Red Army, still incompletely organised, could not withstand the assault and retreated in complete rout. On May 2, 1919 the dictatorship of the proletariat was already on the verge of collapse but the revolutionary fervour of the masses and the decisive action of various revolutionary Communist leaders saved the position for Soviet Hungary. The workers in the mills and factories joined the ranks of the Red Army in bodies. Within the course of a few days the Red Army had gained strength, and under the leadership first of the 'Left' reformist Wilhelm Bohm and then of the revolutionary Eugen Landler, who had resigned from the ranks of the Left Socialists, delivered blow after blow at the advancing enemy, especially the Czecho-Slovakian army and occupied in battle a large part of Czecho-Slovakia, where a Slovakian Soviet Republic was set up. The Entente, in the person of the French premier, Clemenceau, demanded that the Hungarian Republic should cease military activities and evacuate Slovakia, promising in exchange the subsequent evacuation of Hungarian territory occupied by the Rumanians. After prolonged discussion of the proposal in the Congress of Soviets, the Soviet government consented to withdraw the Red Army from the territory it had occupied. But, as was to be expected, the Entente played false after the evacuation of Slovakia, the Rumanian troops, in spite of Clemenceau's promise, did not evacuate Hungarian territory beyond the River Tisza. Thereupon, on July 20 the Red Army assumed the offensive, the plan for which, however, owing to

the treachery of former officers, had already been transmitted to the Entente. The offensive ended in the rout of the Red Army. In view of the defeat of the Red Army, the food difficulties, which had been rendered extremely acute by the economic blockade imposed by the Entente, the counter-revolutionary movement within the country, the direct treachery of the Social Democrats, who were carrying on negotiations with the Entente for the suppression of the Soviet government, and, finally, owing to the hostility of the peasant masses, the Soviet government, on August 1, decided to capitulate and to transfer the power to a "trade union government" consisting of Social Democratic trade union bureaucrats who immediately restored capitalist private property and the bourgeois state apparatus. A few days later this government was overthrown by the bourgeoisie.

In spite of the grave mistakes committed, the results of the Hungarian proletarian revolution were of extreme positive importance. That revolution prevented the big attack on Soviet Russia planned by the Entente in the spring of 1919 by diverting to itself the Rumanian and French forces which had been assigned for this purpose. By the example it showed of the revolutionary heroism and creative power of the working class, it proved the possibility of proletarian revolution and proletarian dictatorship in the Central European countries even in the conditions that existed in 1919. By destroying—although only for a short period—the age-old oppression of the ruling classes of Hungary, it created a revolutionary tradition which will be a powerful motive force in the future proletarian revolution in Hungary. The lessons of the proletarian dictatorship in Hungary are a valuable contribution to the ideological and political armament of the revolutionary proletariat of the world.

PAGE 50 * Lenin's Report Delivered at the Seventh All-Russian Congress of Soviets on Behalf of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars "like the Seventh Congress (December 6-9, 1919) itself, marks a turning point in the period of "War Communism," as expressed in the fact that the first and most acute period of the Entente intervention and the civil war had come to an end, and that for the first time since the spring of 1918 the Party and the Soviet government were able to turn to tasks of economic development. The military situation which existed at the time of the Seventh Congress of Soviets was marked by a decisive change in the situation on all the fronts of the civil war, a change which soon resulted in the liquidation of the main forces of the White Guard counter-revolution—Kolchak and Denikin. Internationally, what distinguished this period was the change of sentiment in the small border states (Finland, Estonia and Latvia) in favour of peace with the Soviet Union, resulting in a number of peace treaties signed in 1920.

As a description of the tasks and conditions of the period of War Communism, the report delivered by Lenin to the Seventh Congress of Soviets is of tremendous significance, because, in the first place, it gives a profound

analysis of the first period of intervention and civil war and sets forth the reasons for the defeat of the imperialists in this first crusade against Soviet Russia. At the same time the report sketches the principal stages of the intervention, and presents a historical outline of the civil war which for its brevity and precision is brilliant. In this connection Lenin gives the underlying principles of the foreign policy of the Soviet Union as evolved in the circumstances of civil war, a policy designed to achieve international proletarian solidarity for the defence of the U.S.S.R. against imperialist attacks and the utilisation of the antagonisms between the "victorious" powers and the defeated powers, the antagonisms between the "Great Powers" and the small countries dependent on them, the internal contradictions between the various groups of the bourgeoisie in the imperialist states and the conciliatory tendencies of the petty bourgeois and intellectuals with regard to the Soviet Union.

Of the questions of an internal nature touched on by Lenin in the report the chief are the question of terror and the question of economic development.

At the Seventh Congress of Soviets Lenin encountered an open attack on the proletarian terror (the question of the Extraordinary Commissions) by the petty bourgeois parties (Mensheviks, Bundists and Socialist Revolutionaries) who had been admitted to the congress. The following points in Lenin's reply should be stressed: 1) "the terror was forced on us by the terrorism of the Entente, by the terrorism of all powerful capitalism which stifled and is stifling workers and peasants and is condemning them to starvation solely for the reason that they are fighting for the freedom of their country" 2) the experience of the civil war in Soviet Russia and the bloody vengeance wreaked on other working class revolutions suppressed by White Guard bourgeois reaction go to show that terror is an inevitable weapon of the revolutionary struggle, 3) the terror does not nullify the significance of the Soviet state as a democracy of the toiling majority of the population.

Very significant is the general exposition of the tasks of economic development given by Lenin in the report to the Seventh Congress. Under the conditions of extreme economic disruption and impoverishment of the working class resulting from the imperialist war and the civil war, Lenin conceived the economic tasks as being chiefly a struggle for the elementary foundations of the economic stability of the country—bread and fuel—and against typhus ("either the lice triumph over socialism, or socialism will triumph over the lice"). For Lenin the creation of this economic stability was a condition for laying the foundation of socialism. Lenin strongly stresses the fact that in the period of the civil war "we began to build from the roof, from a wing or a cornice, while the foundation did not receive proper attention." This idea was subsequently developed by Lenin in the speech on economic development delivered at the Ninth Party Congress, and received its fullest expression in the plan for the electrification of the country.

At the same time speaking in his report on the economic tasks Lenin expresses his reliance on the discipline and self-sacrifice of the workers on the high level of 'heroism of the workers in the rear,' which found expression in the Communist *subbotniks*, the restoration of transport by the organised workers, and so on. This fact is an extremely important one for an understanding of the period of 'War Communism' as a whole. The discipline, self-sacrifice and heroism of the workers were just as much causes of victory in the civil war and the successful coping with the unparalleled difficulties of the period of War Communism as they later were for the success of socialist construction in the period of the First Five Year Plan for the completion of the foundation of socialist economy during this period, and for the final answer to the question 'Who will win?' in town and country in favour of socialism, and as they are in the present stage on the road to the abolition of classes and the building of a socialist society.

Another such condition stressed by Lenin, one to which he directed the particular attention of the congress, was the sympathy and support of the workers (and, to a certain degree, of the peasants) of the West, which prevented the Entente powers from launching their armies against the Soviet Republic and compelled them to withdraw their forces from the Soviet fronts, because of the danger that they might go over to Soviet Russia. In Lenin's report, the sympathy and support of the workers of the West is stressed as *one of the most important and decisive factors in the struggle against the interventionists*. And so it remains to this day, when we are witnessing not only 'sympathy' for and semi-passive support of the Soviet Union on the part of the workers of the West, but a new revolutionary wave and a growing revolutionary crisis in a number of countries in the West and the East.

Finally the third condition for economic success to which Lenin drew the attention of the congress was the conquest of the peasant masses. Lenin of course, is here referring to the middle peasantry, for the poor peasants sided with the proletariat even before the civil war, while the kulak was, and still is, on the side of counter-revolution. The conquest of the middle peasant who in the first main period of the fight against Kolchak and Denikin had made his choice between them and the Soviet government by accepting a military and political alliance with the proletariat, is emphasised in this report. It is from this standpoint also that Lenin in this same report, in dealing with the immediate economic tasks states that the peasant surrendered his grain 'in the form of a loan,' and that the worker will repay his debt to the peasant 'a hundredfold'. It should be noted that Lenin stresses the important part played by the dictatorship of the proletariat in the question of the 'food loan' as expressed in his reference to the 'firm attitude' of the working class towards the peasants.

PAGE 52 * Lenin is referring to the crushing of Soviet Hungary by the intervention of the Entente acting through Rumania and Czecho-Slovakia. See note to p. 47* in this volume.

PAGE 52 ** British troops were landed on the Murmansk coast in the latter part of July 1918. Archangel was seized in the early part of August. A Right Socialist Revolutionary "Northern Government" existed until September, when it was replaced by a Cadet Government headed by the 'Narodni Socialist Chaikovsky'. The British continued to occupy Northern Russia until the beginning of 1920, when they were driven into the sea by Red Army divisions. Soviet government was restored in Archangel on February 21, 1920.

The occupation of Siberia (the Czecho-Slovakian mutiny and the Kolchak revolt) lasted from May 1918, when the Czecho-Slovakians revolted, until January 1920, when Kolchak was finally routed and subsequently arrested. The Entente participated in the occupation of Siberia by directly organising the revolt of the Czecho-Slovakians, through the foreign embassies resident in Vologda, supplying them with military equipment, assisting the Socialist Revolutionaries and Cadets to establish a government in Siberia and a Socialist Revolutionary Committee of Members of the Constituent Assembly and a Popular Army in Samara, organising the Socialist Revolutionary Directorate, against which they subsequently turned Kolchak, and, finally, by supporting, arming and equipping Kolchak's troops during the whole of his activities in Siberia.

The occupation of Eastern Siberia by the Japanese began in April 1918 with the seizure of Vladivostok, and, after the revolt of the Czecho-Slovakians, took the form of an inter-Allied intervention. After Kolchak was routed, Japan attempted to consolidate her positions in Far Eastern Siberia, but was forced by the pressure of the insurrectionary movement, which led to the formation of the Far Eastern Republic, to confine herself to the occupation of the Ussurisk Region and the Maritime Province, using the White Guard government of Merkulov as a tool. It was not until the end of 1922 that the People's Revolutionary Army of the Far Eastern Republic smashed the White Guards and thus compelled Japan to evacuate Eastern Siberia.

In the South, the Entente supported Denikin and his Volunteer Army, controlling him and his government, subsidising him, supplying him with munitions and despatching troops to his aid (the French landing in Odessa).

PAGE 56 * This statement was made in December 1919 in the House of Commons by Churchill, War Secretary in the Lloyd George government (1916-22).

PAGE 62 * In the parliamentary elections in France in 1919 the victory was gained by the reactionary Right bourgeois parties of the National Bloc, representing the interests of big capital. In the Chamber of Deputies the leaders of the National Bloc were Poincaré and Millerand. The government of France remained in the hands of the National Bloc until the 1924 elections, at which the victory was gained by the petty bourgeois parties (the Left Bloc).

PAGE 65 * After the Entente had adopted the plan for a conference on the Prinkipo Islands (see note to p. 26** in this volume), William Bullitt, an

American journalist, was sent in February 1919 to start unofficial negotiations with the Soviet government on behalf of United States Secretary of State Lansing (actually on behalf of President Wilson) and the British Prime Minister, Lloyd George. Bullitt brought with him a written project proposing to discontinue the intervention against Soviet Russia and to establish normal trade relations provided 1) that the Soviet government concluded peace with the counter revolutionary governments at that time existing on Russian territory, 2) that these governments were recognised as sovereign within frontiers corresponding to the military fronts as they existed at the time, and 3) that mutual amnesties were granted and a proportional demobilisation of the armies undertaken.

Receiving the consent of the Soviet government to this project in principle (on condition that the Powers should endorse the project not later than April 10), Bullitt returned to Europe. However, nothing came of the matter owing to the hostility of France and the British diehards, and also owing to the fact that Kolchak began to gain certain victories on the war front. Subsequently in reply to a question in Parliament, Lloyd George denied all knowledge of the Bullitt mission.

In 1933 when diplomatic relations were established between the USSR and the USA, Bullitt was appointed the first United States ambassador to the USSR.

PAGE 66 * Lenin is evidently referring to the counter revolutionary activities of the British diplomatic agent, Lockhart. After the British Embassy left Vologda on June 22, 1918 Lockhart remained in Moscow, in order in conjunction with the White Guards and the Socialist Revolutionaries, to hatch conspiracies against the Soviet government and to organise uprisings, explosions, the burning of food bases, and so forth. On September 2, Lockhart was arrested by the Cheka in the headquarters of a counter revolutionary organisation which had drawn up a plan for penetrating into the Kremlin and arresting Lenin and the Soviet government.

PAGE 76 * At the time of the Ninth Party Congress, at which Lenin delivered the present report, the revolution was gaining brilliant victories in the armed fight against the White Guards within the country and against international imperialism. All the principal war fronts, including the Kolchak and Denikin fronts, had been liquidated. There still remained the threat of a resumption of the war by Poland, while Wrangel was biding his time in the Crimea. The Kolchak and Denikin armies had been destroyed, and the Entente had not yet organised the new attack by Poland and Wrangel against the Soviet Republic. These occurred later. Thus at the time of the Ninth Party Congress the Soviet Republic was not in a state of war, nor was it at peace with world imperialism. It was rather enjoying a respite that was neither war nor peace. Such was the situation when the Ninth Congress, under the leadership of

Lenin set about concentrating the major forces and the attention of the country on the economic front

The internal economic situation of the Soviet Republic had been rendered critical by the imperialist war and the bitter civil war. At the end of 1919 over four fifths of the fuel used by industry and transport was wood. Industry was working at twenty six per cent of capacity owing to lack of raw material, fuel and food, and its products went principally to supply the Red Army. The workers were fleeing to the country districts in order to escape the famine. Hunger and disease resulted in mass absences from work which swallowed up between one-quarter and one third of the working time. There was a tremendous drop in productivity of labour. Agriculture was in a state of decline. The area under crops in 1918-19 was only three fifths of the pre-war acreage. The yield of the grain crop had dropped. Industrial crops were being replaced by grain crops. Transport was in a state of collapse. About 55 to 60 per cent of the total number of locomotives were in need of repair. The liberation of the border Soviet republics from the White armies, achieved by the military heroism of the workers and peasants, brought sources of coal, grain and raw materials under the control of the Soviet government. This made it easier to tackle economic disruption and famine. But it demanded a tremendous exertion of effort, for it involved restoring the economic life of the country, and the only thing that could ensure success in this respect was the strictest centralisation of administration coupled with the principle of individual management, discipline, firmness and unity of will of the proletariat, and a display of heroism on the front of labour equal to the heroism which had been displayed on the military front in the civil war. The arguments supporting these slogans make up the main part of Lenin's report to the Ninth Party Congress. And the main work of the congress was devoted to the problems of economic development and the organisation of labour.

State compulsory mobilisation of the industrial proletariat for work in industry, universal labour service in the procurement of fuel, the clearing of railroad track and so forth, the conversion of whole army units into labour battalions, the organisation of a mass movement for voluntary labour without pay in the form of the communist subbotniks and, finally, the state distribution of products based on the food quotas, or requisitions, in place of purchase and sale—such was the system of economic measures which had evolved in practice by the time of the Ninth Congress and which were endorsed by the Ninth Congress on the basis of the general plan it adopted for the restoration and socialist reconstruction of the national economy (see note to p. 218* in this volume).

The creation of one labour front with the purpose of saving the revolution as quickly as possible from the collapse that might follow from economic disruption compelled the Party strictly to apply the principle of individual management. In doing so, the Party under the leadership of Lenin, was obliged to overcome a Right opportunist deviation on this question, represented

at the Ninth Congress by what was known as the 'Democratic Centralism Group' by a group of business leaders and by a group of trade union leaders. Although they constituted an insignificant minority at the congress, these groups put up a stubborn fight against the position of Lenin and the Central Committee of the Party.

The 'Democratic Centralism Group,' which at the time of the Ninth Congress had become a distinct opposition group, was headed by people who had just recently (1918) been 'Left Communists—Ossinsky, Sapronov and Maximovsky. The "democratic centralism" of this group had nothing in common with Bolshevik democratic centralism. It was nothing but a reversion to bourgeois democracy and in practice would have so amended the structure of the Party and the Soviet government as to undermine the proletarian centralism of both, enfeeble the proletarian dictatorship and in this way—particularly in the conditions of 1919-20—play into the hands of the class enemies of the proletariat. The fight put up by this group against individual management in practice served the same end, since it was an expression of their petty bourgeois democratic aspirations. An anti-Party position was also taken up by a group of business leaders headed by Rykov and Milyutin and by a group of trade union leaders headed by Tomsky who at the congress opposed the principle of individual management.

Lenin had already put forward the slogan of individual management at the time of the first "respite, in the spring of 1918 (See *Selected Works*, Vol. VII, "Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government," the chapter entitled "Symmetrical Organisation and Dictatorship"). He had at that time already shown the absolute necessity of individual management and its entire compatibility with Soviet, socialist democracy. And now at the Ninth Party Congress he vigorously advocated the principle of individual management which has been so strikingly justified in the subsequent work of socialist construction in the Soviet Union and which is being consistently applied by the Party to day on the basis of the wide development of Soviet proletarian democracy. Arguing against the opposition groups of Ossinsky, Rykov and Tomsky, Lenin said of them, as he had said of the 'Left' Communists in the spring of 1918 that they were repeating the refrain of the Mensheviks, Socialist Revolutionaries and the bourgeoisie.

No less dangerous in the conditions that existed at the time of the Ninth Congress, and also tending to weaken the proletarian dictatorship and to aggravate the economic disruption was the proposal made by Trotsky on the eve of the Ninth Congress in a letter addressed to the members of the Central Committee to replace the food quotas by a food tax and to institute freedom of trade. The Central Committee rejected Trotsky's proposal (it received only four votes in the Central Committee) as an absolutely erroneous one. In the conditions that prevailed at the beginning of 1920, to have adopted such a proposal would only have served the interests of kulak counter-revolution. There was the threat of a resumption of war by Poland and Wrangel, and the abolition of the food quotas and the institution of freedom of trade under

such conditions would have contributed to the economic disarmament of the revolution. Siberia, the Kuban and the North Caucasus, which had just been captured from the counter revolutionaries, had not yet been de kulakised, and under the conditions of war the kulaks would have used freedom of trade as a weapon against the Soviet government. Finally stocks of industrial goods had become exhausted, production was declining, and under these circumstances a dearth of commodities, given the existence of freedom of trade would only have created a favourable soil for the counter revolutionary activities of the kulaks among the peasants.

It is quite obvious that under such circumstances there was no possibility of abolishing the food quotas and instituting freedom of trade. At that time this would have meant a return to capitalism. Only by creating one labour front, on the basis of the heroism of the workers, and by the food quotas in the rural districts only by improving management by introducing the individual management principle, did it become possible to maintain a relationship of classes within the country that was favourable for the proletariat, to conduct a successful war against Poland and to achieve progress, instead of decline, in industry. That is why the Ninth Congress of the Party, under the direct leadership of Lenin, centred the attention of the Party, the Soviet government and the working class on combating economic disruption and restoring economic life, and while adopting an extensive plan of economic restoration, in the main preserved the economic policy of the period of War Communism. All its decisions, which laid the main emphasis on the economic front, were based on this policy, thus rejecting the attempts made both by the 'Democratic Centralism Group' and its allies among the business leaders and trade union leaders, and by Trotsky to undermine this basis in circumstances when this could only have served to weaken the position of the proletariat in its fight for the preservation of the dictatorship.

PAGE 79 * In the spring of 1919 the advance of the Poles continued and led to the capture of Baranowicz in March and of Molodieczno in May. At the same time, on March 6, an advance by Kolchak on the Eastern front began, which soon resulted in the fall of Ufa and Belebei. The advance of Denikin began on May 6, and the first advance of Yudenich against Petrograd on May 16. The spring of 1919 also witnessed the first outbreaks of the Makhno mutiny, the revolt of Grigoryev, the invasion of the White Finns, and also the occupation of Soviet territory by the British and French in the North and South.

PAGE 82 * Lenin is here referring to the White terror which accompanied the suppression of the Finnish workers' revolution in the beginning of 1918. The revolution was crushed by the Finnish bourgeoisie with the help of German troops. The terror was carried out with unparalleled ferocity by the military dictator General Mannerheim. Tens of thousands of workers were exterminated in the small country of Finland.

PAGE 84 * Peace between Soviet Russia and Latvia was signed on August 11 1920, in Riga Latvia received ethnographic frontiers (i.e., frontiers embracing territory with a predominantly Lettish population), 4 000,000 rubles in gold and the right to acquire forestry concessions in Russia over an area of about 250 000 acres

Peace was signed with Finland on October 14, 1920 Finland acquired ethnographic frontiers by the peace treaty, with certain accretions in the Petahengi district, in the extreme North

The peace with Esthonia, signed on February 2, 1920, marked the first break in the blockade of the R.S.F.S.R. organised by Great Britain and France with the purpose of undermining the Soviet government It was for this reason that the Soviet government consented to pay Esthonia 15 000,000 gold rubles

The Russo Lithuanian peace conference began in Moscow on May 9 1920 According to the treaty signed on July 12 1920, Lithuania received part of the gubernias of Kovno, Vilna and Suvalki In addition, Lithuania received 3,000 000 gold rubles from the R.S.F.S.R.

PAGE 85 * On March 28, 1920, in reply to the thrice repeated proposal of the Soviet government, Poland sent a note consenting to the opening of peace negotiations This note was intended as a diplomatic screen for the general offensive which Poland was preparing against the Soviet Republic

Poland proposed that the negotiations should be held in Borissov situated in the northern section of the Russo Polish front, the most strongly fortified part of the Soviet line Poland proposed that the armistice should apply only to this section of the front, and not to the whole front Meanwhile Poland was concentrating her main forces on the southern section of the front, against the Ukraine which in comparison with other sections was feebly protected In response to the proposal of the Soviet government that the negotiations should be transferred to Warsaw, Moscow, or to a neutral city, the Poles issued a manifesto to the Ukraine calling for the recognition of Petlura, who had concluded a military alliance with Poland At the same time Savinkov and Bulak Balakhovich were organising White Guard detachments on Polish territory

The military forces of Poland and the Russian White Guards were in fact commanded by the French General Staff Although the Poles were at first successful, the Red Army soon began to advance on Warsaw but the Red battalions were subsequently obliged to retreat

Peace with Poland was signed on October 19, 1920, in Riga. By the Treaty of Riga Poland received frontiers which, although extending eastward beyond her ethnographic frontiers, were nevertheless much narrower than those which the Soviet government had offered her before the outbreak of war

PAGE 85 ** The reference is to the Kapp putsch in Germany On March 13 1920, Berlin was occupied by the counter revolutionary divisions of Generals

Lüttwitz and Ehrhardt, who prior to this had served the Minister of War the Social Democrat Noske, in suppressing working class activities. The coalition government, consisting of Scheidemannites (Social Democrats) and bourgeois democrats, fled to Dresden. A reactionary 'Labour Government' was set up headed by Kapp who was a creature of General Ludendorff and Admiral von Tirpitz. But the mass strikes of the proletariat, which grew into a general strike the arming of the proletariat in the industrial districts and the refusal of the state employees and the petty bourgeoisie to support the Kapp government, led to the resignation of Kapp and the return of the 'legitimate' Scheidemann bourgeois government. However the working class masses continued the struggle under the banner of the Soviets, especially in the Ruhr. Noske replied by wholesale shootings and courts martial. In the Ruhr, the Social Democrat Severing, subsequently Minister of Home Affairs particularly distinguished himself in suppressing the workers.

PAGE 88 * The history of the question of corporate or individual management in the period immediately prior to the Ninth Party Congress is as follows. Differences on this question arose in the Party at the end of 1919 in connection with the question of the militarisation of labour and the question of compulsory labour service. The principle of individual management at that time met with opposition on the part of the Communist fraction in the All Russian Central Council of Trade Unions, which Lenin addressed on January 12 1920 in defence of the principle of individual management. Lenin also spoke on this subject in January 1920 at the Third Congress of Councils of National Economy. But here, too, the decision adopted recognised the corporate principle as the basic form of management although the congress recommended that the comparative value of corporate and individual management should be tested in practice. In its subsequent development the discussion involved large numbers of Party workers, business leaders and trade union leaders. At the All Ukrainian Party Conference, in connection with a report made by Stalin on "The Immediate Tasks of Economic Development," in which he advocated Lenin's proposal, opinion was equally divided. The Moscow Committee of the Russian Communist Party also favoured corporate management. The fraction of the All Russian Central Council of Trade Unions adopted Tomsky's theses, which were opposed to individual management. As will be seen from the report made by Lenin at the Ninth Congress, the Central Committee of the Party favoured Lenin's point of view, which, in fact, triumphed at the congress (see notes to p 76* and p 218* in this volume).

PAGE 98 * In 1918 the Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries developed an intense agitation against the decree of the Council of People's Commissars "On the Centralisation of Management, the Protection of the Railroads and the Increase of Their Carrying Power" passed on March 26, 1918, which instituted individual management on the railroads (see *Selected Works* Vol

VII, note to p 340*) They carried on agitation against individual management at the time of the Ninth Congress as well, joining forces with the opposition in the Communist Party

PAGE 94 * Kameney's theses entitled 'The Principal Tasks of the Working Class at the Present Moment' were published in the *Izvestiya of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party* on March 12, 1920. They contained the following propositions: the principal evil is bag trading, the free market and profiteering, the work of explaining the harm they are causing must be intensified, and they must be overcome with the aid of the Soviet apparatus, the congress must concentrate the attention of the Party on this question, the Party will conduct determined warfare on the Menshevik slogans of freedom of labour and freedom of trade, which are disordering the restoration of Soviet economic life and are, in practice, preparing the way for the restoration of capitalism.

PAGE 94.** The reference is to a pamphlet by S. I. Gussev entitled *The Immediate Problems of Economic Development (On the Theses of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.) Materials for the Ninth Congress of the R.C.P.* The pamphlet was published by the Revolutionary Military Council of the Caucasian Front and contained theses drawn up by Gussev and adopted on his report by a Party conference of the Caucasian Front and the Caucasian Reserve Army. It is these theses that Lenin has in mind when he goes on to say that the Central Committee introduced into its own theses a whole paragraph taken entirely from Gussev's theses. This was the first clause in Gussev's theses, which declared that "the single economic plan must be divided into economic periods, and in each period one main economic task must be set, in the following order: a) the restoration of transport, the transport of grain, fuel and raw materials and the creation of storehouses for them, b) the intensive development of the production of machinery for fuel, raw material and grain production and for the development of transport, c) the intensive development of machine building for the production of articles of general consumption, and d) the intensive production of articles of general consumption."

This clause was inserted in Sec. II ("A Single Economic Plan") of the theses of the Central Committee for the Ninth Congress entitled "The Immediate Tasks of Economic Development" (see note to p 218* in this volume).

PAGE 96 * This speech of Lenin's, delivered on May 5, 1920, is devoted to the resumption of wagon traffic on the R.S.F.S.R. by Poland, which together with the Wrangel campaign was the last stage in the armed struggle of counter-revolution in the period of War Communism. At the time Lenin was making his speech at a meeting of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, the Poles were already approaching Kiev.

Poland's new offensive (for which see note to p 85* in this volume) was undertaken shortly after the Ninth Party Congress at which the principles of economic restoration were laid down and a labour mobilisation of the working class and the peasantry decided on Lenin's speech on Poland's offensive on Soviet Russia is therefore of tremendous value for a study of the principal phases of the period of War Communism. This speech is virtually a continuation of Lenin's analysis of the motive forces and development of the civil war made in the report to the Seventh Congress of Soviets (pp 50-75 in this volume). This speech supplements the analysis in respect of the last stage of the civil war in the period 1918-20.

Lenin first of all stresses the fact that the antagonisms between the victorious powers at that time formed one of the chief obstacles to the creation of a united front of the imperialists against the Soviet state.

In particular, Lenin stresses the difference between the way Great Britain set about smashing the proletarian state and the way France set about it. The antagonism of interests existing between the two countries on this question was also regarded by Lenin as a factor that would make for the failure of Poland's military campaign against the Soviet Union.

Lenin discerns a profound difference between the intervention of 1919 and the Polish campaign of 1920, consisting in the fact that the war of the Poles against Soviet Russia was only a remnant of the former great plan of the imperialists for the destruction of the Soviet state. Lenin did not underrate the danger that in connection with the Polish campaign, the imperialists might resume their attempts at a united attack on Russia from all sides (as partly manifested in the Wrangel campaign), but he pointed out that the lack of consistency in the policy of bourgeois Poland, her inability to rely with certainty on her allies owing to the antagonism of interests between the capitalist groups in Poland herself, and finally, the fact that the Polish bourgeoisie was exposing itself in the eyes of the toilers of Poland and the world, were all tending to weaken Poland's position, and therefore the interventionist policy of the imperialists as a whole.

The concluding part of Lenin's speech is devoted to a description of the second turn which the Party had already definitely undertaken from economic tasks to the tasks of war—"Everything for the war"—the slogan with which Lenin concluded his speech—once more, and for nearly a whole year, turned the attention of the Party and the working class to the tasks of civil war and the determined application of the policy of War Communism.

PAGE 100 * On the subject of the conversion of a large part of the Red Army into an army of labour, which had begun before the Ninth Party Congress, and which, in the conditions that prevailed in the spring of 1920, was undertaken because of the necessity of both keeping the Red Army mobilised and utilising it on the economic front, the following decision (contained in the resolution entitled 'The Immediate Tasks of Economic Development') was adopted by the Ninth Party Congress:

The utilisation of military units for labour purposes is equally of a practical economic and a socialist educational value. Conditions under which the employment of military labour on a large scale is expedient are: a) the simple nature of the work, such as can be performed by all Red Army men equally; b) the practice of a system of tasks, failure to perform which shall entail a reduction in rations; c) the practice of a system of rewards; and d) participation in the work on the labour sector of a large number of Communists capable of infecting the Red Army units by their example.

The employment of the larger military units will inevitably result in a higher percentage of Red Army men not being directly engaged in production. Hence, the utilisation of whole labour armies with the retention of the army apparatus, will be justified only by the necessity of preserving the army intact for military purposes. As soon as this necessity passes, unwieldy general staffs and administrations must be disbanded, the best elements among the skilled workers being utilised as small shock labour detachments in the more important industrial enterprises." (Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XXV, Appendix, "Resolution of the Ninth Congress of the Russian Communist Party")

PAGE 105 * The 'Report on Combating the Famine' delivered by Lenin on June 4, 1918, the "Telegram on the Organisation of Food Detachments," sent to Penza on June 27, 1918 the letter 'To the Workers of Petrograd' and finally, the leaflet 'Comrades Workers, Onward to the Last Decisive Fight!' written by Lenin in the early part of August 1918, serve as documents of Leninism both on the subject of combating the famine and on the policy of the Party in the agricultural districts.

These documents coincide in time and in their principal theme with the other letter to the workers of Petrograd ("The Famine") reproduced in this volume (pp 14-21) and the Report on the Present Situation June 27, 1918 reproduced in *Selected Works*, Vol. VII. Like them, they treat the fight against the famine as a fight for socialism (for the profound and important system of socialism), call for the mass creation of proletarian food detachments and the organisation of the poor peasants for a "crusade" for bread, and direct this crusade against the kulaks. In 1918 it was the kulak who chiefly held the grain. The kulak actively resisted the grain monopoly concealed grain surpluses incited the middle peasants to do likewise, and organised counter revolutionary actions in the countryside. Hence organising a fight for grain meant organising a struggle against this class enemy of the proletariat and the poor peasants. Lenin, with his characteristic forcefulness, declared that "acute starvation has driven us to a purely Communist task" namely, to smash the resistance of the kulaks. It is extremely important to note the disposition of forces which Lenin recommends in this fight against the kulaks: the proletariat is to organise the poor peasants against the kulaks and conclude an agreement with the middle peasants, for "the working class cannot make peace with the kulak, but it may seek and is seeking an agreement with the middle peasant" (see 'Comrades Workers, Onward to the Last Decisive Fight!'). Hence Lenin even at that period quite definitely proclaimed the slogan of an alliance between the proletariat and the middle peasantry.

(relying on the poor peasantry and not for one moment relaxing the fight against the kulak), which at the Eighth Party Congress was made the foundation of the Party's policy in the rural districts for several years during the transition period in the U.S.S.R. down to the time when the Party having by its firm and correct leadership ensured the adoption of universal collectivisation by the poor and middle peasant masses, and after the adoption of the slogan advanced by Stalin of liquidating the kulaks as a class on the basis of universal collectivisation adopted at its Sixteenth Congress a new slogan namely that the collective farm peasant constitutes the chief bulwark of the Soviet government in the rural districts

PAGE 106 * The reference is to decisions of nearly every congress of the Second International from 1889 to 1914. For instance the Paris Congress of 1889 declared that wars in capitalist society "prevent the realisation of the policy of democracy and tend to disintegrate the civil life of the country, and that they are a weapon of the possessing classes against democracy. The Brussels Congress of 1891 and the Zürich Congress of 1893 repeated this thought "In the next war millions of persons will be called to the colours, whole nations will be hurled against each other. A war will break out the like of which is unknown to world history and in comparison with which the last Franco-Prussian War was mere child's play. This war will throw our civilisation back for centuries. We find the same thing stated in the resolutions of the London Congress of 1896, the Paris Congress of 1900 and the Amsterdam Congress of 1904 all of which refer to the brutality of colonial policy, the burden of militarism and the destruction of mankind which the coming war would involve. The resolutions of the Stuttgart Congress of 1907, the Copenhagen Congress of 1910 and the Basle Congress of 1912 emphatically stressed the menace to civilisation and the proletariat of the forthcoming world war. The Stuttgart Congress called on the international proletariat to 'carefully follow events,' in order to be prepared for the danger, and in the event of the outbreak of war to make every effort "to put an end to the war as soon as possible" and to take advantage of the economic and political crisis it would cause to expedite the fall of capitalist rule. The Basle Congress confirmed the resolutions of the Stuttgart and Copenhagen Congresses, and in a manifesto declared "The governments should remember that in the present situation in Europe and with the present temper of the working class, they can release the fury of war only at their own peril, they should remember that the Franco-Prussian War was followed by the Commune that the Russo-Japanese War set the revolutionary forces of the peoples of the Russian Empire in motion, that the growth of military and naval armaments has caused the class conflicts in England and on the Continent to become acute to an unprecedented degree and has led to great strikes." The truth of these prophecies was fully shown by the war of 1914-18. But the Second International, which had passed these resolutions, did not remain true to itself. The vast majority of the parties of the Second International

replied to the truly unparalleled miseries of the imperialist war of 1914-18 by betraying the working class and by supporting the war in the interests of their own bourgeoisie

PAGE 106 ** Lenin is referring to Frederick Engels' preface to a pamphlet by Sigismund Borkheim entitled *Zur Erinnerung für die deutschen Mordpatrioten 1806 1807 (In Memory of the Supreme German Patriots of 1806-07)* In this preface, dated December 15 1887, Engels said

And finally no war is any longer possible for Prussia Germany except a world war, and a world war indeed of an extension and violence hitherto undreamt of Eight to ten millions of soldiers will mutually massacre one another and in doing so devour the whole of Europe until they have stripped it bare than any swarm of locusts has ever done Devastation famine, pestilence, general demoralisation both of the armies and of the mass of the people produced by acute distress hopeless confusion of our artificial machinery in trade, industry and credit, ending in general bankruptcy, collapse of the old states and their traditional state wisdom to such an extent that crowns will roll by dozens on the pavement and there will be nobody to pick them up, absolute impossibility of foreseeing how it will all end and who will come out of the struggle as victor only one result absolutely certain: general exhaustion and the establishment of the conditions for the ultimate victory of the working class.

"Thus is the prospect when the system of mutual outbidding in armaments, driven to extremities, at last bears its inevitable fruits This, my lords, princes and statesmen, is where in your wisdom you have brought old Europe And when nothing more remains to you but to open the last great war dance—that will suit us all right The war may perhaps push us temporarily into the background, may wrench from us many a position already conquered But when you have unfettered forces which you will then no longer be able again to control, things may go as they will at the end of the tragedy you will be ruined and the victory of the proletariat will either be already achieved or at any rate inevitable."

In June 1918 Lenin wrote an article entitled 'Prophetic Words' (*Collected Works*, Vol XXIII) devoted to this preface, in which he quotes this passage and shows how Engels' words were borne out in the imperialist war of 1914-18

PAGE 110 * The grain monopoly was instituted by the Provisional Government soon after the February Revolution According to the law passed by the Provisional Government, all surpluses of grain over and above what was needed for personal requirements (food and seed) were declared state property and had to be delivered to the state at fixed prices. But the Provisional Government was unable to put the grain monopoly and the fixed prices into effect, because it was a government defending the interests of the possessing classes The fulfilment of the plan of grain procurements in 1917 was obviously unsatisfactory in January the plan was fulfilled by 20 per cent, in May by 34 per cent, and in September by 25 per cent

Shortly after, in August 1917, the bourgeois government doubled grain prices in the interests of the landlords and the kulaks, but even this measure failed to produce the necessary influx of grain

All that remained was the old and tried method of abolishing fixed prices and relying on private initiative. And this was the method the bourgeois Provisional Government actually adopted on the eve of its collapse since bank capital, which was interested in the grain trade, had long been demanding it.

After the October Revolution, amidst incredibly severe difficulties, when 80 or 90 per cent of the demand of the population was being satisfied by bag trading and profiteering, which had begun to develop before the October Revolution, the People's Commissariat of Food began to put the grain monopoly into effect on the basis of barter of commodities between industry and agriculture. During April and May 1918, the People's Commissariat of Food succeeded in accumulating a large quantity of commodities in demand by the peasantry (to a total value of about 1,162,000,000 rubles) with the object of receiving in exchange 2,000,000 tons of grain, that is, approximately the minimum yearly food requirements of the consuming regions. However, this plan for the realisation of the grain monopoly by means of barter was frustrated by the outbreak of the civil war, which necessitated the institution of a system of food quotas, or requisitions. As far as was practical, the Soviet government in relation to the toiling section of the peasantry, supplemented the requisition of surplus grain by barter.

PAGE 111 * Lenin is referring to the kulak revolts against the Soviet government which began in the spring of 1918 in the South of Russia (the Don, the Kuban and the Ukraine) and in the Volga region. These revolts occurred in the most important grain bearing areas. In May 1918, a revolt of the Socialist Revolutionaries and the Czecho-Slovakians broke out, organised with money supplied by the British and French bourgeoisies.

PAGE 112 * The split among the Russian petty bourgeoisie mentioned by Lenin refers to the differences which arose within the petty bourgeois parties—the Mensheviks and the Socialist Revolutionaries. Part of them (chiefly the Ukrainian Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries) applied for support to the German bourgeoisie, while the other and greater part (the Russian Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries) sought the aid of British and French capital.

PAGE 112 ** Lenin is referring to an all-Russian conference of Mensheviks, at which on May 12 1918, Cherevanin, Groman and Kolokolnikov made counter-revolutionary reports on the Soviet government and its economic policy. On this same day the conference adopted counter-revolutionary theses proposed by Martov for fighting the Soviets with the object of replacing them by a bourgeois state. It is these theses Lenin has in mind. Their substance was as follows:

"I Before the October Revolution the Soviets played a very important part as an implement for the revolutionary education of the masses and as a lever by which the proletariat exerted political influence on the state machine

"II The October Revolution, however, imposed on the Soviets the task of replacing the state machine, a task which distorts their revolutionary significance

" On the basis of this estimate of the Soviets, the conference resolves 1) to continue to carry on propaganda explaining to the working class masses the fictitiousness of the so-called Soviet Republic 2) to call on the workers to fight for a genuine democratic republic 3) to strive to secure new elections to the Soviets and to come out at these elections with the slogan All state power to the Constituent Assembly, and in the localities to the democratic organs of urban and rural government 4) to take part in the present Soviets in the capacity of an irreconcilable opposition to the Bolshevik regime "

Lenin, expressing his opinion of these utterances and resolutions of the Mensheviks, said that "the civil war is stirring, counter revolution is raising its head," and that the Mensheviks had become its open aiders and abettors The All Russian Central Executive Committee accordingly adopted a decision on June 14, 1918, expelling the Mensheviks and the Right Socialist Revolutionaries from the Soviets

PAGE 116 * The decrees of the Soviet government to which Lenin is here referring were the decrees of the All Russian Central Executive Committee of May 18 and May 30, 1918, on the organisation and the principles of procuring food for the starving country These decrees served as the corner stone of the whole food policy of the Soviet government in the period of acute struggle for grain

Here are some of the clauses of the decree of May 13, 1918

"1) Reaffirming the inviolability of the grain monopoly and the fixed prices, and the necessity for a ruthless war on grain profiteers and bag traders, to make it incumbent on every holder of grain to declare for delivery, within a period of one week after the publication of this decree in every volost, the whole surplus of grain over and above the quantity required for sowing his fields and for personal consumption, in accordance with established standards, until the new harvest

"2) To call upon all toiling and poor peasants to unite immediately for the purpose of carrying on a ruthless fight against the kulaks

"3) To proclaim as enemies of the people all persons possessing surpluses of grain and not bringing them to the delivery points, or wasting grain on the private distillation of spirits instead of bringing it to the delivery points, to bring them for trial before the revolutionary court, imprison them for a term of not less than ten years, confiscate all their property, and expel them from their communities forever, while illicit distillers of spirits shall in addition be condemned to compulsory social labour "

This decree gave the People's Commissariat of Food dictatorial powers in the practical realisation of the measures indicated and was announced by telegraph as coming into effect immediately

The decree of May 30 dealt principally with the structure of the unified food bodies. The decree provided that the food bodies should assume the duty of supplying the population with all articles of prime necessity and thus prepare the way for the nationalisation of trade in such articles.

In addition to the decrees of May 13 and May 30, 1918 which gave legal form to the "crusade" of the proletariat for grain, the All Russian Central Executive Committee on May 20, in connection with a report delivered by J. M. Sverdlov on differentiation among the peasantry, adopted a resolution stating that it

"considers it necessary to point to the extreme urgency of uniting the toiling peasants against the rural bourgeoisie. All local Soviets must immediately undertake and energetically conduct the work of ascertaining what antagonism of interests exists between the poor peasants and the kulak elements, of arming the poor peasants and of establishing their dictatorship."

PAGE 117 * In the Ukraine, under the government of the monarchist general Skoropadsky—who had been made "hetman" of the Ukraine by the German generals at the time of the German occupation—free trade in grain prevailed, which, of course, did not save the workers of the Ukraine from starvation. It is the opponents of the grain monopoly and the advocates of free trade in grain—in particular, the Mensheviks and the Socialist Revolutionaries, including the Left Socialist Revolutionaries—whom Lenin tells to go to Skoropadsky.

PAGE 128 * The Czecho-Slovakian counter-revolutionary war against the Soviet Republic was organised by the governments of England and France in 1918. Previous to that, in the summer of 1917 the Provisional Government had formed an army consisting of Czecho-Slovakian prisoners of war for the purpose of fighting the Germans on the Russian Western front. In 1918, after the Brest-Litovsk Peace had been concluded between the German and the Soviet governments, the Commander of the Czecho-Slovakian forces declared that they desired to be transferred to France. To this the Council of People's Commissars agreed. When the army was spread out along the Siberian Railway from Penza to Irkutsk, its Commander, on the instructions of the Entente governments and in agreement with the Right Socialist Revolutionaries, gave the order for rebellion against the Soviet government. With the aid of the Czecho-Slovakian forces, the counter-revolutionaries seized the Urals and the Volga districts, and later Siberia. Protected by the Czecho-Slovakians, the Socialist Revolutionaries, Mensheviks and Constitutional Democrats organised a Committee of Members of the Constituent Assembly in Samara, proclaimed it the "organ of Russian democratic government," and elected a Directorate of Five. This Directorate did not last long, however, as the Entente was interested in setting up a stronger counter-revolutionary government. Admiral Kolchak, who was Minister of War in this Directorate, dispersed this body.

and in agreement with the Entente, proclaimed himself Supreme Ruler. After a long struggle, the Red Army finally defeated the Czecho-Slovakian and Kolchak counter-revolutionary forces in 1920 and later the Czecho-Slovakian forces were repatriated to Czecho-Slovakia via Vladivostok.

PAGE 129 * The German troops occupied the Ukraine mainly for the purpose of obtaining food supplies. According to the first treaty concluded with the Ukrainian Rada, the latter undertook to supply Germany with 980,000 tons of grain and by a supplementary agreement it undertook to deliver 1,050,000 tons of grain, 11,000,000 head of cattle, 30,000 live sheep, 1,000,000 geese, 1,000,000 head of other poultry, 65,000 tons of sugar, 980 tons of butter, fats, etc. The Rada could not fulfil this undertaking. The government of Skorpinsky, which succeeded the Rada, could do no more. The German military command then resorted to requisitions and to the sending of military units to the rural districts to sequester the food. These measures failed, however, and only 9,132 carloads of grain were obtained. The incessant guerilla war carried on by the workers and peasants, a number of uprisings of the population, and the increase of revolutionary ferment among the German troops of occupation themselves, prevented German imperialism from plundering the food of the Ukraine.

PAGE 129 ** The part played by the kulaks in all previous revolutions to which Lenin refers here, is most vividly reflected in the history of the French revolutions. In the French Revolution of the end of the eighteenth century, the rich peasants having used the abolition of feudal relations in their own interests, became counter-revolutionary, and, together with the bourgeoisie of the towns, endeavoured to put an end to the revolution and to rescind the social and economic legislation of the Jacobin Convention of 1793-94, which had been designed to protect the interests of the mass of the peasants. It was the rich peasants, the active counter-revolutionary role they played and their influence on the small peasants, which helped to bring about the collapse of the revolutionary dictatorship of the Jacobins and the victory of the empire of Napoleon I over the revolution.

A great part was also played by the rich peasants in the defeat of the Revolution of 1848. The rich peasants were the avowed enemies of the "Reds" in the years of revolution. A pamphlet which enjoyed great popularity among the rich peasants in the summer of 1848 described the revolutionaries, particularly the Socialists, in the following way: "The Red is not a human being, he is a Red: he does not reason, he does not think. He has no sense of truth, no sense of justice, no sense of beauty or goodness. He is not a moral, rational and free being like you and I: he is a fallen and degenerate being." With the aid of soldiers drawn from the urban petty bourgeoisie, the rich peasants and a section of the small peasants influenced by the rich peasants, the bourgeoisie crushed the revolt of the workers of Paris in 1848, after which the rich peasants and the section of the small peasants under their influence

cast their votes for Louis Bonaparte, who subsequently abolished the republic and proclaimed himself Emperor of France

It was the votes of the rich peasants and the small peasants influenced by them that gave a majority to the monarchists in the Constituent (National) Assembly in France after the workers had overthrown the monarchy of Napoleon III in 1871. And it was again with the help of soldiers drawn from the rich peasants and the small peasants influenced by them (aided by the armies of Bismarck) that the bourgeoisie crushed the Paris Commune of 1871.

PAGE 131 * Lenin is referring to a decree of the Commissariat of Food and of the Supreme Council of National Economy published on August 8, 1918, establishing fixed prices for grain of the harvest of 1918 and previous years.

PAGE 133 * A Letter to the Workers of Eletz' is expressive of the attitude of Lenin and the Communist Party towards a bloc with the Left Socialist Revolutionaries. The letter was written on August 6, 1918, that is, a month after the Left Socialist Revolutionary revolt against the Soviet government (see *Selected Works*, Vol. VII, note to p. 187*). The circumstances that called forth the letter will be apparent from the letter itself.

In this letter, Lenin, exposing the tales invented by Kryukov, declared that an agreement with the middle peasantry need not necessarily be accompanied by an agreement with the Left Socialist Revolutionaries. An agreement with the Left Socialist Revolutionaries could (amid great conflict and differences on questions of home and foreign policy it is true) remain in force only as long as the "crusade" against the kulaks had not begun in the rural districts and the Committees of Poor Peasants had not been organized. It is noteworthy that during the discussion in the All Russian Central Executive Committee on the decree on the Committees of Poor Peasants on June 11, 1918 (see note to p. 138* in this volume), V. Karelin, who, in the name of the Left Socialist Revolutionaries and the Maximalists spoke against the decree, defended the rights of the kulak who possessed grain surpluses, and the Left Socialist Revolutionaries refused to vote on the decree. The development of the socialist revolution in the countryside proved to be unacceptable to the Left Socialist Revolutionaries and—with the exception of the best elements among them, who later joined the Communist Party—placed this party in the same category as the Mensheviks and the Right Socialist Revolutionaries. This "fall" of the Left Socialist Revolutionaries is spoken of by Lenin in the present letter and in the "Speech Delivered to Delegates from the Committees of Poor Peasants of the Moscow Region" which follows it in this volume.

PAGE 133 ** Very shortly after the revolt of the Left Socialist Revolutionaries in July 1918 (see *Selected Works*, Vol. VII, note to p. 187*) a general meeting of the Saratov branch of the Left Socialist Revolutionaries adopted a resolution in which it was stated that

The act committed by responsible organs of the Party in Moscow, in the objective conditions of the present moment was a savage blow at Soviet Russia, and consequently at revolutionary Russia. At the same time the united front of the parties of the socialist revolution is being broken, our Party is being destroyed, encouragement is being given to the parties of the compromisers, the Right Socialist Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks who regard us as their allies and wide scope is being afforded for every kind of counter revolutionary venture "

The general meeting further resolved to adopt measures with a view to amalgamating branches which shared the platform of the Saratov members, and for this purpose to call an all Russian conference of Left Socialist Revolutionaries. This conference took place in Saratov shortly afterwards and was attended by representatives from twenty one Left Socialist Revolutionary branches. As will be seen from Lenin's letter, the majority expressed themselves in favour of a revision of the tactics of their party and approved the position of the Saratov branch while a large minority favoured supporting the Central Committee of the Left Socialist Revolutionaries which had headed the revolt against the Soviet government. The conference did not adopt any binding decisions on this question owing to the fact that the votes were divided.

PAGE 134 * The Yaroslavl revolt (July 6-21 1918) was organised by the White Guard League for the Defence of the Fatherland and Freedom, headed by Boris Savinkov, on the initiative of and on funds supplied by the diplomatic missions of Great Britain and France, at that time resident in Vologda. Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries took part in the revolt.

The Yaroslavl revolt broke out almost simultaneously with the revolt of the Left Socialist Revolutionaries in Moscow and was to have been accompanied by revolts in other cities. However, it was only in Rybinsk and Murom that the White Guards succeeded in organising revolts. Yaroslavl was chosen as a strategical centre, which was to unite the rebellious *Czechs* located in the Volga region with the Northern front, cut off the whole of the Volga from Moscow and thus prevent the transport of grain to the centres of the proletarian revolution.

Although ostensibly carried out on behalf of the demand for a Constituent Assembly, the revolt was in fact designed to restore the monarchy. Having seized power, the Whites annulled not only the decrees of the Soviet government, but also the ordinances of the Provisional Government on the subject of the gubernia and uyezd commissars, the gubernia uyezd and volost Land Committees, and so on. The volost elders and uyezd prefects of tsarist times were restored. Savage vengeance was wreaked on the Communists and their sympathisers. More than one hundred Communists were drowned in the Volga, and S. N. Nakhimson, who had been sent by the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party to direct the Party work in Yaroslavl, was shot at the very outbreak of the revolt.

The revolt lasted about two weeks and was suppressed on July 21 1918 by Red troops moved into Yaroslavl from Kostroma, Rybinak, Moscow and other cities

PAGE 136 * The Speech Delivered to Delegates from the Committees of Poor Peasants of the Moscow Region" on November 8 1918, was made by Lenin at the time when the Committees of Poor Peasants, under the guidance of the proletariat and its party, had already in the main accomplished their tasks (see note to p 142**) The Committees of Poor Peasants and the Soviets in the rural districts must not exist separately, ' Lenin says in this connection in the present speech and refers to the draft of a resolution which had been prepared for the Sixth Congress of Soviets providing for the formation of new Soviets in the rural districts by means of new elections in which the Committees of Poor Peasants were to take an active part (see note to p 142**) We shall, ' he went on to say, 'merge the Committees of Poor Peasants with the Soviets we shall turn the Committees of Poor Peasants into Soviets The Committees of Poor Peasants were not yet being dissolved but they were intended to be dissolved as soon as with their help and under the guidance of the proletariat and its party, the newly formed Soviets in the rural districts would take firm hold as genuine organs of Soviet government and communist development (Resolution of the Sixth Congress of Soviets—see note to p 142**) It was therefore very important to sum up at the regional congresses of Committees of Poor Peasants at that time being held in Moscow and Petrograd the results achieved by the Committees of Poor Peasants and to indicate the principal tasks to be accomplished by the poor peasants under the guidance of the proletariat and its party through the Soviets And this Lenin does in his speech He indicates three such principal tasks to continue the ruthless struggle against the kulaks to maintain the agreement (alliance) with the middle peasants, and to achieve unswervingly even if slowly a "transition to the new form of agriculture the social cultivation of the land" to collective farms and socialist agriculture It must be noted that when referring to these aims Lenin emphatically stresses the fact that the kulaks "are enemies no less formidable than the capitalists and landlords," that they would put up a savage resistance to the transition to socialist agriculture And in this connection Lenin speaks of the expropriation of the kulaks This idea of the expropriation of the kulaks in connection with the transition to socialist agriculture foreshadowed the slogan of the liquidation of the kulaks as a class on the basis of universal collectivisation which was advanced by Stalin in 1929 and which has now in the main been accomplished by the Party

PAGE 138 * The recent events to which Lenin refers were the measures taken by the Party with regard to the poor peasants particularly the creation and development of the Committees of Poor Peasants, which arose in the period of "the crusade for bread" on the basis of the decree of the All Russian

Central Executive Committee of June 11, 1918 entitled "On Organising the Poor Peasants and Supplying Them with Bread Articles of Prime Necessity and Agricultural Implements". As the very title of the decree shows, it provided not only for the organisation of the Committees of Poor Peasants, but also for a number of measures designed to assist the poor peasants. According to this decree (for which see Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol XXIII, Appendix), all could be elected to the Committees of Poor Peasants except kulaks and well-to-do peasants employing hired labour and possessing surpluses of grain and food products in general, or trading or commercial or manufacturing enterprises. Thus, the middle peasants were also allowed to join the Committees of Poor Peasants. The concrete practical duties laid on the Committees of Poor Peasants by the decree were 1) to distribute bread, articles of prime necessity and agricultural implements in the villages (in which respect the poor peasants received a number of privileges and advantages), and 2) to assist the local food organs in depriving the kulaks and the rich of surplus grain. The general political duty laid on the Committees of Poor Peasants by the Party and the Soviet government was, under the guidance of the proletariat and the Party, to develop the struggle against the kulaks, to bridle them, to emancipate the middle peasants from their influence and win them over and in this way to accomplish the aims of the socialist revolution in the rural districts.

PAGE 142 * The Congress of the Committees of Poor Peasants of the Northern Region was held in Petrograd on November 3-5 1918. About five or six thousand delegates were expected but more than ten thousand actually attended. The congress was opened outdoors on the Uritsky Square, while the business sessions were held simultaneously in two halls of the Volk House in Petrograd.

Among the more important of the resolutions of the congress, mention should be made of the decision to merge the Committees of Poor Peasants with the Soviets and the decision to create model regiments of the Red Army consisting of poor peasants—the regiments were to be formed of representatives of the Committees of Poor Peasants: two from each committee.

PAGE 142 ** The plan for the reformation of the Committees of Poor Peasants' in the sense referred to by Lenin ('we shall merge the Committees of Poor Peasants with the Soviets, we shall turn the Committees of Poor Peasants into Soviets') was drawn up by the Central Committee of the Communist Party and adopted in the form of a resolution by the Sixth Congress of Soviets (held November 6-9, 1918). Merging the Committees of Poor Peasants with the Soviets implied the reorganisation of the Soviets in the rural districts, and this therefore was the substance of the resolution of the Sixth Congress of Soviets. The main part of the resolution ran as follows:

On the Committees of Poor Peasants created by the decree of June 11 was laid the task of bridling the profiteering of the kulaks and arousing the

active political life those strata of the rural population which are capable of accomplishing the aims of the proletarian socialist revolution. The Committees were to save the toiling middle peasants from the influence of the kulak parasites and to secure their support. In this work the Committees had inevitably to exceed the bounds of the decrees of June 11. The Committees united the more revolutionary elements of the countryside, enlisted the toiling middle peasants in the common fight against the kulaks and were beginning to take into their hands the whole political, administrative and economic life of the villages and volosts. A dual power was thus created in the countryside, resulting in a sterile waste of effort and in confused relationships. Yet, the consolidation of the power of the workers and peasants in Russia is impossible without a uniform organisation of Soviets over the whole territory of the R.S.F.S.R. The dictatorship of the proletariat of the workers and poor peasants must be exercised constantly by the organs of Soviet government from top to bottom. Socialist construction can be completed only provided Soviet organisation everywhere in the countryside precisely conforms with the Constitution of the Soviet Republic. Only on this condition will the poor peasants and the kindred toiling middle peasants receive full opportunity of finally ensuring their enjoyment of the conquests of the socialist revolution. Only the creation of a uniform Soviet organisation in town and country can consolidate the amalgamation of the proletariat of the town with the proletariat and the semi-proletarian elements of the countryside in the common struggle against oppressors of all kinds. The Committees of Poor Peasants, which have in practice united the poor peasants, must take a most active part in the conversion of the volost and village Soviets into genuine organs of Soviet government and communist development. The All-Russian Congress of Soviets, recognising the necessity of completing the Soviet structure by the creation of a uniform organisation of Soviets over the whole territory of the Soviet Republic instructs all gubernia and nyezd Soviets immediately to institute new elections of all volost and village Soviets, entrusting the immediate conduct of the elections to the Committees of Poor Peasants, which are the organs of communist development in the countryside. The general guidance of the reformation of the Soviets in the rural districts is entrusted to the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, which is charged with the duty of drawing up detailed instructions" (Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XXIII, Appendix.)

On the basis of this resolution, the All-Russian Central Executive Committee on December 2, 1918, issued instructions governing the new elections to the volost and village Soviets, which charged the village and volost Soviets with the duty of "carrying out all the decisions of the competent higher organs of the Soviet government and of co-ordinating all Soviet activities in the given territory, and, in addition, of seeing to it that agriculture is properly conducted and, in particular, of transforming it along communist lines (the formation of labour communes)."

After this reorganisation of the Soviets had been effected, the Committees of Poor Peasants were dissolved.

PAGE 142 *** In the second half of 1918 the Soviet government began to carry out a series of considered measures designed for the improvement of agri-

culture and for its collectivisation. On July 4, 1918, the Council of People's Commissars decided to assign 10 000 000 rubles for the organisation of agricultural communes. A number of legislative measures were passed for supplying the peasants with agricultural implements and fertilisers. On November 5, 1918, the Council of People's Commissars passed a decree 'On the Formation of a Special Fund for Measures Designed To Develop Agriculture'. A fund of 1,000,000 000 rubles was created. Subsidies and loans were granted a) to agricultural communes and labour co-operatives, and b) to village communities and groups, provided they abandoned individual for social cultivation and harvesting. In accordance with instructions issued by the Commissariat of Agriculture on February 13, 1919, subsidies were also granted to "co-operative organisations and other labour corporations for measures leading to the collectivisation of agriculture." Interest was not payable on the loans.

The decree provided that farms receiving loans were obliged to adopt a number of agronomical measures. Special committees were set up in the Commissariat of Agriculture and the gubernia Land Departments for the distribution and management of funds: these committees examined projects for the improvement of agriculture. The grants made from this billion ruble fund considerably helped to strengthen and improve the poor and middle peasant farms and played an important part in the creation of agricultural communes and artels in the years of War Communism.

PAGE 144 * The article 'Valuable Admissions by Pitirim Sorokin' was written by Lenin in November 1918 and published in *Pravda* No 252 November 21, 1918. It was devoted to the class changes that had taken place in Soviet Russia in connection with the great revolutionary events in Western Europe (the revolutions in Germany and Austria-Hungary in November 1918) and with the first results of the imperialist intervention and the civil war in Russia.

The most important of these changes were the movement which had begun among the middle peasants for an alliance with the proletariat, the way for which had been prepared by the work of the Committees of Poor Peasants guided by the Party, the fight waged by the Committees of Poor Peasants against the kulaks, and the first months of the civil war which were convincing the middle peasant that his path was not the path of counter-revolution, that the latter would lead to the restoration of the yoke of the landlords, and that he could be saved from this fate only by an alliance with the proletariat and by the preservation of the Soviet government.

"The middle peasant," said Stalin, "whined and vacillated between revolution and counter-revolution as long as the bourgeoisie was being overthrown and as long as the Soviet power was not consolidated, therefore it was necessary to neutralise him. The middle peasant began to turn towards us when he began to convince himself that the bourgeoisie had been overthrown 'for good' that the Soviet power was being consolidated, that the kulak was being

overcome and that the Red Army was beginning to triumph on the fronts of the civil war" (*Leninism* "The Three Basic Slogans of the Party on the Peasant Question")

The swing towards the proletariat was at that time also taking place among the petty bourgeoisie of the towns. Lenin speaks of a change of front on the part of a whole class of the whole petty bourgeois democracy. It behoved the proletariat and the party of the proletariat to define very precisely its attitude towards this change of front on the part of the middle peasantry and the urban petty bourgeoisie. It is to this task that Lenin's present article is devoted, and it takes the letter of the Right Socialist Revolutionary Pitirim Sorokin (see the next note) as one of the symptoms of this change of front.

Lenin in his article sums up the processes that were taking place among the middle peasantry and the urban petty bourgeoisie, and on the basis of this summary puts forward as a general line of policy the demand for an "agreement with the petty bourgeois strata of the toiling population, who were turning towards the proletariat, the demand that the proletariat should win them over and lead them. This line is particularly stressed by Lenin in relation to the middle peasantry. Lenin gave expression to this idea of an alliance with the middle peasantry even earlier in his draft for an appeal to the workers entitled "Comrades Workers, Onward to the Last Decisive Fight! (pp 128-32 in this volume) in his Letter to the Workers of Eletz (pp 133-35) and in his Speech Delivered to Delegates from the Committees of Poor Peasants of the Moscow Region' on November 8 1918 (pp 136-43). But in this article it takes the shape of the clearly formulated slogan "to come to an agreement with the middle peasant, while not for a moment renouncing the struggle against the kulak and at the same time relying solely on the poor peasant"—a slogan which later was converted into instructions of the Eighth Party Congress in the resolution on "Policy Towards the Middle Peasantry which was drawn up by Lenin (pp 184-87 in this volume), and in the programme of the Party, which was also adopted by the Eighth Congress.

PAGE 144 ** In 1917 Pitirim Sorokin was one of the editors of an extreme Right Socialist Revolutionary newspaper, *Volya Truda*. His letter, which was reproduced in No 251 of *Pravda*, November 20, 1918, was one of the first confessions of political bankruptcy to issue from the camp of the Right Socialist Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks. Similar admissions very soon followed from other representatives of the petty bourgeois parties, e.g., by the "Narod" group, also consisting of Right Socialist Revolutionaries and members of the Constituent Assembly. These declarations, of course, did not imply that their authors had come over to the side of the proletarian revolution. They were the temporary vacillations of people who were already on the side of bourgeois counter-revolution. But they were significant as reflections of the change of front towards the proletariat on the part of the petty bourgeois masses. That is why Lenin uses the letter of Pitirim Sorokin

to define the policy of the Communist Party towards these masses Sorokin himself shortly afterwards again swung in the other direction. In 1922, as lecturer in Petrograd University he attempted to smuggle through counter-revolutionary ideas in his lectures and writings, for which he was exiled abroad. Lenin dealt with these utterances of Sorokin in his article "The Significance of Militant Materialism" (*Selected Works*, Vol. XI)

PAGE 148 * Lenin is referring to the activities of the counter-revolutionary governments: the government of Chaikovsky in Archangel; the government of the Committee of Members of the Constituent Assembly in Samara; Petlura's government in the Ukraine and so forth. The moving spirits in these governments were the Socialist Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks, supporters of the Constituent Assembly. Having proved themselves to be pawns in the hands of the West European imperialists and of the Russian bourgeoisie now overthrown, these supporters of the Constituent Assembly were endeavouring to restore the pre-October regime and to clear the way for Kolchak, Denikin and the like.

PAGE 154 * The Speech Delivered at the First All Russian Congress of Land Departments, Committees of Poor Peasants and Communes was made only a month later than the 'Speech Delivered to Delegates of the Committees of Poor Peasants of the Moscow Region' reproduced earlier in this volume. The present speech is wholly devoted to the 'transition from small individual peasant farms to the social cultivation of the land to socialist agriculture' and the fact is particularly stressed that the initiative in this matter must be taken, under the guidance of the proletarian dictatorship by the poor peasants, who must fight the kulaks and at the same time conclude an alliance, an agreement with the middle peasants. Note should also be taken of two points characteristic of the present speech and developed by Lenin in later utterances on the socialist reconstruction of agriculture. The first is the statement that it was impossible for the whole country to adopt collective agriculture at once, without a number of transitional measures. The second refers to the necessity of acting by methods of conviction, demonstration and example (and not by coercion) with regard to the peasantry, and especially the middle peasantry in the collectivisation of agriculture.

In the stages of the New Economic Policy already passed through, the proletarian dictatorship, under the leadership of the Party of Lenin adopted a number of transitional measures necessary for the mass collectivisation of agriculture, and created the economic and political conditions for the mass collectivisation of agriculture, and by 1929—"the year of great change"—made possible "the immediate transition from backward, low productive, small and dwarf individual farming to large-scale, collective and highly productive farming" (see the Resolution of the Sixteenth Party Congress on Collective Farm Development and the Improvement of Agriculture). But even in these conditions while developing universal collectivisation of agri-

culture, and converting the middle peasant from a small master—the ally of the proletariat and of the poor peasantry—into a collective farm peasant—the main support of the proletariat in the countryside—the Party continues to guide itself by Lenin's statement regarding the necessity of applying methods of conviction and demonstration in the collectivisation of agriculture and not of compulsion and coercion. It is only because it acted in accordance with these behests of Lenin's that the Party, constantly combating the principal danger to the collectivisation of agriculture—Right opportunism in theory and practice—and its coadjutor, the aftermath of Trotskyism—Leftism and "Left" distortions—was able, as a result of the First Five Year Plan, to transform the Soviet Union from a country of small and dwarf agriculture into a country of large-scale, socialist agriculture.

The First All Russian Congress of Land Departments, Committees of Poor Peasants and Communes, at which Lenin delivered this speech, sat from December 11 to December 20, 1918, and its labours were entirely devoted to the problems of the collectivisation of agriculture along the lines indicated by Lenin. "The most important problem of agrarian policy," one of the resolutions of the congress states, "is to undertake the widespread, consistent and undeviating organisation of agricultural communes, Soviet communist farms, and the social cultivation of the land."

PAGE 158 * Lenin is referring to the Decree on the Socialisation of the Land passed by the Soviet government on February 19, 1918, developing the Decree on the Land of November 8 (October 26), 1917. An exhaustive explanation of the main contents, purpose and significance of the decree of February 19, 1918, is given by Lenin in *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky* in the chapter "Subserviency to the Bourgeoisie in the Guise of 'Economic Analysis'."

PAGE 166 * Lenin's report on 'Work in the Rural Districts,' delivered at the Eighth Congress of the Russian Communist Party, and the resolution adopted in connection with this report, are prominent documents in Lenin's theoretical and political legacy. Apart from the fact that they give a profound generalisation of the experience gained in the relations between the proletariat and the peasantry in the early period of the proletarian dictatorship, these documents retain their vast political significance in the present period of socialist construction in agriculture.

At the time of the Eighth Congress the question of the relations between the proletariat and the basic mass of the peasantry had assumed an urgent character. Although the international position of the Soviet government had grown much stronger by the time of the Eighth Congress (the annulment of the Treaty of Brest Litovsk by the German revolution, the wave of proletarian revolutionary actions in the West, and so forth), intervention and the civil war were in full swing. The task of consolidating the alliance between the proletariat and the middle peasants created during the civil war, while relying

on the poor peasants and not for a moment relaxing war on the kulaks, was of tremendous importance in defeating armed counter revolution, apart from its general importance for the dictatorship of the proletariat and socialist development. Yet, in spite of the repeated directions given by Lenin in the period of the Committees of Poor Peasants (see particularly the article 'Valuable Admissions by Pitirim Sorokin' in this volume) as to the necessity of pursuing a policy of "agreement (alliance) with the middle peasant of winning him over to the side of the proletariat and leading him in spite of the policy correspondingly adopted by the Central Committee of the Party and the Central organs of Soviet power (e.g., the resolution of the Sixth Congress of Soviets quoted in the note to p 142** of this volume) it frequently happened that in the provinces this policy towards the middle peasant was not appreciated and obvious distortions of the Party line were committed resulting principally from a failure to distinguish between the middle peasants and the kulaks (the anti middle peasant deviations in the practice of the Committees of Poor Peasants, cases in which middle peasants were compelled to join the communes etc.) This tended to revive the inclinations of the middle peasants towards the kulaks, and in certain cases resulted in the middle peasants taking part in the kulak revolts against the Soviet government. All this rendered it necessary to raise the question of the middle peasant at the Eighth Party Congress as a special item on the agenda—"Work in the Rural Districts."

Lenin's report on this point of the agenda of the congress was a development of the fundamental propositions on the question of the middle peasant which were set forth in brief form in the "Report of the Central Committee, delivered by him at this congress (in this volume). The development of these propositions was accompanied by a severe criticism of the anti middle peasant deviations practised in the provinces, and a ruthless condemnation of all acts of coercion against the middle peasant in the course of the socialist reconstruction of agriculture. The whole report is based on the dual nature of the middle peasantry, so vividly depicted in the article "Economics and Politics in the Era of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat" (in this volume). This dual nature of the middle peasantry makes it 'a class that vacillates' and a very cautious attitude must therefore be observed towards this class, and very tactful, but firm, leadership must be exercised over it by the proletariat and the proletarian party. But Lenin entirely subordinates the question of the alliance with the middle peasantry to the question of the proletarian dictatorship. Later—after Lenin's death—the Party was to encounter opportunistic attempts (on the part of Bukharin and Zinoviev) to establish a reversed relation between these questions, an attempt to place the question of the alliance with the middle peasantry above the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The Party has always vigorously repulsed all such opportunistic attempts and has faithfully adhered to the Leninist standpoint, which, while appreciating the tremendous importance of the alliance between the proletariat and the peasantry, subordinates the policy of the Party on

this question to a superior task—the preservation and consolidation of the proletarian dictatorship which alone can ensure the building of socialism, and, in particular, the socialist reconstruction of agriculture

The resolution on 'Policy Towards the Middle Peasantry' adopted by the Eighth Congress, on the one hand, and point 18 of the Party programme which was adopted by this congress, fully expressed the group of ideas developed by Lenin in this report. The brief speech for a gramophone record on 'The Middle Peasants', given later on in this volume, reproduces these same ideas in a very succinct but at the same time popular form

Lenin's policy, embodied in the resolutions of the Eighth Congress, of maintaining a firm alliance between the proletariat and the poor peasants (the latter being the main support of the proletariat) on the one hand, and the middle peasants, on the other, under the leadership of the proletariat, for the purpose of waging a joint struggle against the kulaks and the bourgeoisie in the transition period in general, was consistently adhered to by the Party in its subsequent practice. It contributed to the victory of the proletariat in the civil war: it consolidated the economic bond between the working class and the masses of middle peasants in the conditions of socialist development along the lines of the New Economic Policy: it paved the way for the 'great change' of 1929—the abandonment of individual farming by the poor peasants and middle peasants for collective farming—and subsequently for the liquidation of the kulaks as a class on the basis of universal collectivisation in agriculture and the conversion of the collective farm peasant into the principal figure in agriculture and the main support of the proletariat in the countryside. By following the Leninist policy of establishing "correct relations with the peasantry" the Party has reached the position in which socialist forms of farming—the state farm and the collective farm—have come to predominate, and in which the 'last serious capitalist class, the kulaks, has been demolished (although not completely). The Party achieved this by smashing Trotskyism, with its "bourgeois denial that the proletarian dictatorship is strong enough and able to lead the peasantry to socialism (Stalin) and its attempts to wreck the alliance of the proletariat and the poor peasants with the middle peasants in the struggle for the victory of socialism in the countryside, and thus to drag the country back to capitalism. The Party achieved this under the firm leadership of its Central Committee, headed by Stalin, smashing not only Trotskyism, but also Right opportunism, with its petty bourgeois liberalism, its rejection of the proletarian leadership of the alliance of the proletariat and the poor peasants with the middle peasants, its inclusion of the kulaks in this alliance, its theory of "automatic development," its theory that the kulak would become absorbed by socialism, and—in the final analysis—its kulak expectation that the socialist reconstruction of the countryside, collectivisation, would collapse and capitalism be restored. The Party achieved this, simultaneously with its fight against Right opportunism, in the fight against the aftermath of Trotskyism—the "Lefts" of the

period 1928-30 and against Left distortions in practice, which undermined the work of collectivising agriculture and played into the hands of the kulaks

PAGE 171 * The law on "Socialist Agrarian Measures and Measures for the Transition to Socialist Agriculture" was drawn up under the direct guidance of Lenin, and was adopted by the All Russian Central Executive Committee of the R S F S R. in February 1919. It reflected the movement that had begun among the poor peasants away from individual farming to higher, social forms of agricultural production. The basis of this law was the nationalisation of the land, which virtually had been begun by the Decree on the Land of November 8 (October 26), 1917.

Articles 1 and 2 of the law ran as follows

"Article 1 All land within the boundaries of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic, no matter in whose tenancy it may be shall be deemed a single state fund

"Article 2 The single state fund shall be directly under the control and at the disposal of the appropriate People's Commissariats and those local government bodies subordinate to them"

The nationalisation of the land was a decisive factor in the reconstruction of agriculture

On the basis of the nationalisation of the land, the law on socialist agrarian measures indicated a series of measures for the development of state farms, communes, agricultural artels, and co-operative organisations for the social cultivation of the land.

Article 3 went on to state

"With the object of finally abolishing all exploitation of man by man, organising agriculture on the principles of socialism, with the application of all the achievements of science and technology, educating the toiling masses in the spirit of socialism, and uniting the proletariat and the poor peasants in their struggle against capital, a transition from individual forms of land tenure to co-operative forms is necessary. Large state farms, communes, the social cultivation of the land and other forms of co-operative land tenure are the best means of achieving this aim and therefore all forms of individual land tenure must be regarded as transitional and obsolescent"

The law dealt in fairly great detail with the main factors in the organisation of state and collective farms, and emphasised the fact that the latter must be voluntary associations. The law on Socialist Agrarian Measures charged the organs of the proletarian state with the duty of carrying on propaganda in favour of collective forms of land tenure as compared with individual forms of land tenure and of giving preference in all their measures to collective associations.

The law very clearly formulated the tasks of the Communist Party in the sphere of the reconstruction of agriculture on communist lines

It was on the basis of this law, and with the considerable material assistance given by the Soviet government to socialist agriculture (the assignment

of a fund of 1,000,000 000 rubles, regarding which see note to p 142*** in this volume), that the collectivisation of agriculture was at that time carried out. However, owing to the severe decline of industry resulting from the imperialist war and the civil war, it was impossible to create the necessary technical basis for the collective farms, and the collective farm movement at that time could not be consolidated. Neither did the decline of agriculture itself help to consolidate it. The Eighth All Russian Congress of Soviets (December 22-27 1920), indicating measures for the revival of agriculture, laid particular stress on the necessity of adhering to the voluntary principle in selecting forms of land tenure.

The principal ideas underlying the law on "Socialist Agrarian Measures and Measures for the Transition to Socialist Agriculture" have remained guiding principles to this day. They were fully reflected in the land code of the Soviet Union, "The Basic Principles of Land Tenure and Land Measures," adopted by the Central Executive Committee of the USSR on December 15, 1928 on the basis of the decisions of the Fifteenth Party Congress.

PAGE 174 * Lenin is here referring to the French Convention in the period of the revolutionary dictatorship of the petty bourgeoisie exercised by the Jacobins (June 1793 to July 1794). In June and July 1793, the Jacobins in the main abolished the relics of feudalism, in which they had the support of the broad masses of the peasantry. But the subsequent "sweeping measures" into which, as Lenin here says, "the Convention launched," failed to meet with such support among the toiling masses either of the countryside or of the towns. These, on the one hand, were measures necessitated by the defence of the revolution from the simultaneous pressure of the counter-revolutionaries at home and the attack of the feudal monarchist states of Europe on revolutionary France: such measures were the centralisation of foodstuffs in the hands of the state, the prohibition of trade, extraordinary taxation of the bourgeoisie, etc. On the other hand, these were measures which followed from the vague petty bourgeois desires of the Jacobins to transform France into an "equalitarian republic," that is, a republic of "equal small producers"—private owners of the land and means of production. But among the measures adopted by the Jacobins there were practically none that afforded direct relief to the poor of the towns and the countryside, or that would make the latter the support the revolutionary dictatorship needed. On the contrary, since they represented the interests of petty bourgeois property, they did not even try to find support among the poor, and at the same time estranged the working class by their anti-labour policy (the preservation of the law prohibiting strikes, the fixing of a maximum wage insufficient to satisfy the prime needs of the workers, etc.). The result was that, having by their measures aroused the hostility of the big and middle bourgeoisie of the countryside, the kulaks and the well-to-do peasants, and not enjoying the necessary support among the impoverished masses of the peasantry and the toiling masses of the towns, they vacillated in their really revolutionary

measures, making concessions to the rural bourgeoisie and the kulaks (relaxing the food dictatorship, raising fixed prices, etc.), and thereby provoked still greater discontent among the urban poor and the workers. Lacking real support among the masses, the revolutionary dictatorship of the Jacobins could not maintain itself for long. It was overthrown by the bourgeoisie. The leader of the Jacobins, Robespierre, was guillotined on July 28, 1794, and the bourgeoisie, having established the "order" that suited it, prepared France for the bourgeois monarchy of Napoleon I.

PAGE 186 * The resolution is referring to the following clauses in the decree on "Socialist Agrarian Measures and Measures for the Transition to Socialist Agriculture," issued in February 1919 (see note to p. 171* in this volume).

"Article 58 In order to ensure the surrounding peasantry the greatest benefit from the state farms and from the communes for the co-operative and social cultivation of the land, as agronomical and cultural centres, it is necessary to link them up with veterinary, breeding, hiring and seed centres, with the improvement of local roads, the organisation of agronomical assistance, and so forth.

"Article 59 The state farms must not fence themselves off from the local agricultural population and must form close contacts with it and help it in every way to conduct farming on proper and better lines."

PAGE 187 * The circular entitled "The Committees of Poor Peasants" referred to here was sent out by telegram in September 1918. The urgency with which the circular was dispatched and the decisive tone in which it was written were due to the necessity of correcting the conduct of the Committees of Poor Peasants and the local food bodies, whose misguided actions frequently aroused the discontent of the middle peasants. The middle peasants were not sufficiently represented on the Committees of Poor Peasants (to which, in accordance with the decree of June 11, 1918, on the organisation of the poor peasants, they had the right to elect and be elected), and frequently received no grain or industrial articles at all.

The circular stated that:

"The slogan advocating the organisation of the poor peasants has been misinterpreted in many localities as meaning that the poor peasants must be pitted against all the rest of the peasant population, not only the obvious kulaks and the rich but also the numerically large section of the middle peasantry who until recently starved and who only under the Soviet government began to breathe freely. The Soviet government has never been antagonistic to the middle peasant. It has always been the aim of the Soviet government to unite the urban proletariat with the agricultural proletariat and with the toiling peasants of average means who do not exploit toilers. The Soviet government has, therefore, always endeavoured to satisfy the needs of the middle stratum of the peasantry together with the needs of the urban workers and the poor peasants."

Explaining the decree of June 11 on "The Organisation of Supplies to the Poor Peasants," the circular states:

"Certain clauses in this decree directly refer to the middle stratum of the peasantry. Thus, the note to Clause 2 speaks of the necessity of enlisting in the Committees of Poor Peasants not only the poor peasants, but also peasants who resort to hired labour but who do not hold their fellow villagers in bondage. According to Clauses 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8, the distribution of grain and articles of prime necessity should be made to all needy peasants and not only to the rural proletarians and semi proletarians. Clauses 9, 10 and 11, which deal with the supply of agricultural implements to the peasants on favourable terms, apply both to the poor peasants and to the middle peasants, since, of course it is the latter more than the former who are in need of agricultural implements."

The circular instructed "all the gubernia Soviets and gubernia food committees to conduct all their activities in harmony with the general policy of the central government and to strive unswervingly for the union of the poor peasants and the middle peasants by satisfying the needs of both."

PAGE 190 * This speech of Lenin's was delivered at the first of several conferences summoned by the Central Committee in 1919 and 1920 for the purpose of ensuring the proper and consistent fulfilment of the decisions of the Eighth Party Congress on the policy towards the middle peasantry and on work in the rural districts. It was made at a period which differed essentially from the one that preceded the report made by Lenin on the same subject to the Eighth Party Congress. In the middle of November 1919 Kolchak's army had already been definitely routed, his capital—Omsk—had been taken, and his government had fled to Irkutsk, while the offensives of Denikin and Yudenich had been repulsed. On the principal fronts the civil war was coming to an end, but it had led to still greater economic disruption, combined with an acute food shortage in the working class centres. The decisive victories over Kolchak and Denikin were confirmation of the growing military and political alliance with the middle peasants. As a toiler, the middle peasant accepted this alliance against Kolchak, Denikin and the imperialist intervention, but since he was a small proprietor, his habits and ambitions unfavourably affected the supply of bread to the cities, thus rendering the food shortage of the workers acute. All the conditions of the time demanded intense effort in strengthening the alliance with the middle peasantry and, on the basis of this alliance, combating the petty proprietor ambitions of the middle peasantry. Unlike the Right opportunists, Lenin never considered that the alliance with the middle peasantry meant making unlimited concessions to the small proprietor. By entirely subordinating this alliance to the interests of preserving and consolidating the proletarian dictatorship, Lenin set limits to the concessions that might be made to the middle peasant. Lenin always considered that the basic aim of the alliance with the middle peasant was to combat the petty bourgeois instincts of the middle peasant, his petty proprietor habits and ambitions, to re-educate him, to achieve the victory of the toiler over the trader and profiteer. And in this

speech, too Lenin, depicting the class and political physiognomy of the social groupings in the rural districts, and once more describing the dual nature of the middle peasant as both a toiler and a small master speaks of the methods by which in the conditions prevailing at that period and in fulfilment of the policy of an alliance with the middle peasant he should be led assisted supported shown and convinced in order that he might be got to adopt socialist agriculture, while at the same time a stubborn and un-deviating struggle must be waged against his trading and profiteering ambitions

PAGE 198 * The Congress of Agricultural Communes and Agricultural Artels which opened on December 3, 1919, should rightly be called the Second Congress, since a First All Russian Congress of Land Departments Committees of Poor Peasants and Communes, at which Lenin made the speech reproduced in this volume on pp 198-207 was held on December 11-20, 1918

The speech delivered by Lenin at the congress of communes and artels in December 1919 contained a further development of the ideas which he had set forth at the first congress of these bodies in 1918. In developing these ideas Lenin lays especial stress on the duty of the communes and artels to influence the peasant masses and to enlist them in the development of socialist agriculture. This could be accomplished only by demonstrating the advantages of socialised production to the peasant masses in practice and by raising the prestige of the communes and the artels in their eyes. Hence Lenin here, as in other of his speeches dealing with the collectivisation of agriculture insistently emphasises the inadmissibility and folly of all attempts "to drive the peasants into the communes by force".

This speech of Lenin's, taken in conjunction with his speeches at the Congress of Committees of Poor Peasants of the Moscow Region (pp 136-43 in this volume), the first all Russian congress of these committees and the communes 1918 (pp 154-66) the Eighth Party Congress (pp 167-83), and the first conference on work in the rural districts in 1919 (pp 190-97) defines the fundamentals of the policy and the methods of collectivising agriculture which have been applied with such brilliant results by the Party and the Soviet government in the period of the First Five Year Plan and at the present stage. The basic ideas of this speech seem to be directed in advance against the "Left distortions" that were committed in the collectivisation of agriculture, and against the position of the Right opportunists on the question of collectivisation, particularly the Right opportunist theory of 'automatic development'.

PAGE 203 * Lenin is referring to an article by Sereda entitled "A Union of Agricultural Communes and Artels" (*A propos of the All Russian Congress of Agricultural Communes and Artels*) which appeared in the *Izvestiya of the All Russian Central Executive Committee*, No 271, December 3, 1919. Sereda wrote

The communes and the artels, and their unions, must organise the greatest possible assistance to the peasant farms which have not yet amalgamated into co-operative unions. This will serve as the best form of propaganda on behalf of co-operative forms of labour and of combating the mistrust and hostility of the unenlightened sections of the toiling peasantry towards the new co-operative forms of farming, it will serve as the best method of counteracting the agitational work of the kulaks, who are inciting the peasants against the communes. The communes and artels must not isolate themselves and stand aloof from village life. On the contrary, they and their unions must adopt a number of practical measures (repair shops, hiring stations, breeding stations, nurseries, etc.) for the use of both themselves and the surrounding peasants. The communes and artels must help the poor peasants and the families of Red Army men in every possible way. If the members of the communes, on holidays, would go to work on the fields of weak peasant households and help these individual farms in a fraternal way by their joint efforts, the number of co-operative farms and the ranks of the commune members would grow very rapidly.

PAGE 211 * The Second Congress of Councils of National Economy, at which this speech of Lenin's was delivered, was held in the latter part of December 1918 at a time when the Soviet Republic was holding its own on a comparatively small territory and was being hard pressed by the civil war and the counter-revolutionary revolts which had been constantly breaking out ever since the Socialist Revolutionary and Czecho-Slovakian revolt organised by the Entente in May 1918 (see note to p. 128*) as a result of which the Soviet Republic had been deprived of the Donets Basin, which used to provide ninety per cent of its fuel, Baku, which might have provided six or seven million tons of oil and the Urals which had an annual coal output of one and a half million tons. The loss of the Ukraine and the Urals deprived Soviet Russia of her sources of metal, with the result that the production of locomotives and railroad cars was discontinued. The food situation had become extremely acute owing to the fact that the grain-bearing regions of the Ukraine, the Northern Caucasus and Siberia were in the hands of the counter-revolutionaries. After leaving the peasants for their private consumption twelve poods of grain for each member of a family in the producing regions, and seven and a half poods of grain for each member of a family in the consuming regions, Soviet Russia would, on the most frugal calculation, have a shortage of fifty-three million poods, or nearly one million tons, of grain for supplying the needs of the working class centres and the Red Army. The economic position of the workers, particularly in regard to food, was rendered still more acute by the absence of organised trade between town and country. The disorganisation of the supply of articles of consumption to the toiling population and raw materials and fuel to the factories was one of the basic defects in economic organisation. For instance, only twelve per cent of the textiles and forty per cent of the matches assigned by the government for the use of the population reached the latter. Railroad cars loaded with textiles, metal articles, leather and other goods dispatched to the countryside to be

exchanged for grain would sometimes on arrival at their destination not be unloaded for months on end. Sometimes goods intended for dispatch to the countryside to be exchanged for grain would be distributed among the urban population or else sold to the peasants for money.

These severe economic difficulties could be overcome only by the strictest centralisation of the administration of industry and the observance of the strictest frugality and planning in supplying industry with raw materials, fuel and food, on the one hand, and by improving trade between town and country on the other. In this case the constriction of the territories of the RSFSR would not be disastrous to industry. Existing supplies of oil, the coal mined in the Moscow area, the extraction of peat, lumbering, and the possibility of transporting the oil which had remained in Grozny, permitted the speaker on the subject of 'The World Situation and the Economic Position of Russia' (Milyutin) to announce at the congress that the year 1919 as far as fuel is concerned will, with certain reductions, be provided for."

Reporting on metal stocks Milyutin further said that 'at present 34,000,000 poods is required, we have 38,000,000 poods at our disposal, that means that the demand for metal in 1919 will be satisfied.

It was also expected to satisfy the needs of the textile industry completely by making up for the deficit in cotton by flax.

The First Congress of Councils of National Economy (see *Selected Works*, Vol. VII note to p. 386*) solved the problem of the transition from workers control to workers management. By the time of the Second Congress this transition had largely been accomplished. In the interval between the First and Second Congresses of Councils of National Economy the nationalisation of the large scale industries had in the main been completed. The number of nationalised enterprises increased from 904 to 1,125. Private trade was also nationalised, which enabled the government to establish fixed prices.

In 1919 the successes gained in the organisation of nationalised industry and national trade rendered the question of a single economic plan a timely one. In the resolutions of the Second Congress of Councils of National Economy we find it stated that "the organisation of production on socialist lines thanks to the nationalisation of all industry now being completed, and the centralisation of the economic administration of the country in the hands of the Supreme Council of National Economy and the local Councils of National Economy, the stocktaking, already largely completed, of raw materials and finished products, and the nationalisation of these raw materials and finished products and their transfer to Soviet warehouses, all make it possible at the present time, in 1919, to draw up a single economic plan, and to systematically carry out the new programme of economic measures in the sphere of agriculture, industry and supply." But it was not until the Ninth Party Congress, held in March 1920 that this task could be tackled and in December 1920 the Eighth Congress of Soviets examined a single economic plan based on

the electrification of the country (the plan of the Goelro for which see note to p 299*)

The adoption of workers management of industry also rendered the improvement of this management urgent. The task was to increase the proportion of working men among the leading personnel in the *Glavks* (see note to p 214**) and to introduce the principle that every member of a board was individually responsible for the work under his charge. In connection with the necessity of introducing the principle of individual responsibility of members of boards Lenin in his speech at the Second Congress of Councils of National Economy, said 'We shall insistently demand that every worker in the Councils of National Economy and every member of a Glavk should know for which branch of business, in a narrow sense he is answerable.'

The military situation and the limited stocks of fuel raw materials and food demanded that administration should be increasingly centralised and that arbitrary actions in the localities should be combated. In this connection, one of the measures adopted by the Second Congress of Councils of National Economy was set forth as follows:

'In view of the strengthening of the central apparatus of economic power, the Second All Russian Congress of Councils of National Economy now regards the regional Councils of National Economy which are intermediary bodies between the centre and the local Councils of National Economy, as a superfluous institution, which complicates the general system of economic relations and renders the further process of systematic centralisation difficult.'

But the improvement in the system of centralised workers management of industry could provide a solution for the economic difficulties only if another basic defect of economic organisation and administration were removed, namely, the fact that the supply of raw materials and fuel to the factories, food to the workers and industrial articles to the peasants (as far as this was possible at that time) had not been properly organised owing to the unsatisfactory state of trade between town and country.

That is why, in his speech delivered at the Second Congress of Councils of National Economy, Lenin declared that the chief problem was to organise economic affairs in such a way that 'the wheels of commodity exchange revolve properly'. "This is the whole problem at the present time," he said. If we bear in mind that at this period Lenin, with great emphasis and precision, advanced the slogan of an alliance with the middle peasant (see 'Valuable Admissions by Pëtrik Sorokin' pp 144-53 in this volume) it will be clear that there must be a direct connection between the emphasis laid on the task of regulating trade and this slogan of an alliance with the middle peasant. It should further be stated that it was at the end of 1918 that the following measures were passed: 1) the decree of the All Russian Central Executive Committee of October 30 1918 entitled "The Tax in Kind on Agriculturists", 2) the instructions of the People's Commissariat of Finance

on this tax, which were published on December 22 1918 and 3) the resolution of the All Russian Central Executive Committee of December 23 1918, on The Tax in Kind Thus, at the end of 1918, following on the slogan of an alliance with the middle peasant, another slogan was issued on the subject of trade between town and country based on a food tax in kind, i.e. what in 1921—in different circumstances and in a correspondingly modified form—was effected by the adoption of the New Economic Policy When the New Economic Policy was adopted at the Tenth Congress of the Party Lenin drew attention to the measures taken at the end of 1918 In the report on the political activities of the Central Committee, he said The question of the tax and quota was raised long ago, as far back as the end of 1918 The tax law is dated October 30, 1918 This law, which introduced the tax in kind on the tillers of the soil, was adopted, but was not put in force Several months after it was passed, several instructions were sent out and it remained in abeyance Lenin then explained why this was so It was because "the taking of surplus grain from the peasant farms i.e. food quotas instead of the food tax was a measure which owing to war conditions was imposed upon us by absolute necessity These war conditions led to the promulgation of the decree of the Council of People's Commissars of January 11 'On Food Requisitions in the Gubernias Producing Grain and Fodder' With the introduction of food quotas instead of a food tax, these war conditions rendered ineffectual the attempt to regulate the exchange of commodities between town and country which Lenin had stressed at the Second Congress of Councils of National Economy

PAGE 211 ** Lenin is referring to the petty bourgeois parties which had adopted the position of the bourgeoisie with regard to the Peace of Brest Litovsk, especially the Mensheviks, the Right Socialist Revolutionaries and the Left Socialist Revolutionaries The Left Communists, headed by Bukharin, as well as Trotsky, had also virtually adopted the position of the bourgeoisie on the subject of the Brest Peace Treaty (see *Selected Works*, Vol VII, "Report on War and Peace and Left Wing Childishness and Petty Bourgeois Mentality")

PAGE 214 * Syndicalist, separatist local and regional tendencies were expressed in the endeavours of various organisations to separate themselves from and achieve independence of the central organs of Soviet government For instance syndicalist tendencies were betrayed by the railwaymen, who regarded the railways as the property of their trade union There were also cases when the workers of various factories assumed that nationalisation meant that the factories became the collective property of the workers engaged in those factories Regional tendencies found expression in the issue of decrees by regional authorities hindering the central organs of government from with drawing foodstuffs from those regions, and similar acts Cases of local tendencies were observed among certain gubernia Councils of National Economy,

which were inclined to submit only to the gubernia Soviet executive committees and not directly to the Supreme Council of National Economy

The decisions of the Second Congress of Councils of National Economy were designed to put an end to these syndicalist, local and regional tendencies preserving the system of centralised administration of national economy through the Glavks (for which see next note) throughout the period of War Communism

PAGE 214 ** The *Glavks* (Chief Committees) and *Centres* (Central Committees) administered the various branches of industry in the period of War Communism. There were over fifty Glavks and Centres in all, among them, for instance, the Metal Glavk, the Sugar Glavk, the Fish Glavk, the Rubber Centre. The Glavks which were subordinated to the Supreme Council of National Economy centralised the whole industry of the country and therefore performed an extremely important function in the time of the civil war. They kept stock of all the material supplies in the country and utilised them in the defence of the Soviet Republic. They counteracted the syndicalist and local tendencies (see the preceding note). An unfavourable feature of the Glavks was that they fettered the initiative of the lower bodies and suffered from swollen staffs, bureaucracy and red tape. It is for this reason that Lenin at the Ninth Party Congress declared that the task of increasing the proportion of workingmen in the Glavks was a central and urgent factor in the construction of the economic apparatus (see *Collected Works*, Vol XXV, "Letter to the Branches of the Russian Communist Party on Preparations for the Congress"). The Eighth Congress of Soviets (December 1920) advocated that local bodies should assume the guidance of economic life and that the administration of industry should to a large degree be decentralised. As a result, 1,829 enterprises were placed under the control of the gubernia Councils of National Economy. The numerous Glavks were replaced by sixteen Chief Boards, each in charge of a particular branch of industry, which administered large enterprises through district centres and directed the activities of the gubernia Councils of National Economy, each in connection with its own branch of industry.

PAGE 216 * Kolupayev and Razuvayev were types used by Saltykov Shchedrin the Russian satirist of the second half of the nineteenth century, to depict the growing rural and urban bourgeoisie of that period in Russia. Lenin uses these names here to designate the capitalists of the pre-revolutionary period, in particular the merchant bourgeoisie.

PAGE 218 * The speech on Economic Development delivered by Lenin at the Ninth Congress of the Russian Communist Party was made in the course of the discussion on the report by Trotsky and the co-reports by Ossinsky and Rykov on "The Immediate Tasks of Economic Development." In note to p. 76 * mention was made (in connection with the Report of the Central Committee made by Lenin at this congress) of the conditions prevailing at

the time the congress was held, the reason why attention at the congress was devoted chiefly to questions of economic development and also why and in what manner, the decisions of the congress on these questions reflected the most characteristic features of the policy of War Communism. It was also stated that all the economic measures proposed by the Ninth Congress were to be carried out on the basis of the *general economic plan adopted by the congress*.

Taken by itself, this plan goes beyond the policy of War Communism. A special section (section II) of the resolution passed by the congress entitled 'The Immediate Tasks of Economic Development' was devoted to this plan. The section begins with the general principle that 'the basic condition for the economic revival of the country is the undeviating adherence to a single economic plan designed for the forthcoming historical period'. On this plan, the resolution goes on to say, "all the economic centres of the Soviet Republic must base their current plans and calculations". The plan itself consisted of two parts. The first, which, as Lenin stated at the end of his report to the Ninth Party Congress on the activities of the Central Committee was entirely borrowed from Gussev's pamphlet (see note to p 94**) laid down "a number of consistent, fundamental and mutually related tasks, *viz*, "a) in the first place, improvement in the condition of transport the creation of essential stocks of grain, fuel and raw material b) machine-building for transport purposes and for the procurement of fuel, raw material and grain c) the intensive development of machine building for the production of articles of general consumption, d) the intensive production of articles of general consumption". The second part of the plan made 'the extensive utilisation of electric power the "prime factor in the technical aspect of the matter" and indicated the following 'approximate sequence in the development of electrification in the country: 1) the compilation of a plan for the electrification of the national economy and the fulfilment of a minimum programme of electrification (designating the principal points of electric supply, utilising for this purpose the existing electric power stations and the regional central power stations in course of construction), 2) the construction of the first series of principal regional electric power stations and the principal transmission lines and the extension of factories producing electrical equipment, 3) the construction of the second series of regional power stations, the further development of power transmission and the electrification of the most important processes of production, 4) the electrification of industry, transport and agriculture.

This plan for the "economic resurrection of the country" was subsequently modified, and the resurrection of the economic life of the country was undertaken on the basis of the New Economic Policy adopted in 1921. Nevertheless, the plan of the Ninth Congress fulfilled an important function, for it was the first attempt to plan economic development and contained the first rough outline of a "single economic plan"—the plan for the electrification of the country drawn up by the Goelro (the State Commission for the Elec

trification of Russia—to which Lenin attributed such great importance (see his report on 'The Work of the Council of People's Commissars at the Fifth Congress of Soviets, pp 247-78 and his article 'A Single Economic Plan' pp 299-307 in this volume)

Like the plan for the "economic resurrection of the country, certain extremely important features of the measures which the Ninth Congress adopted in connection with the fulfilment of the plan went far beyond the limits of War Communism. Section V of the resolution on "The Immediate Tasks of Economic Development was devoted to labour or socialist competition. The congress pointed out that competition between factories, districts, departments, workshops and individual workers must be made the object of careful organisation and attentive study by the trade unions and economic bodies. Features which go beyond the bounds of the policy of War Communism and which were later developed under the New Economic Policy are also contained in the decisions of the Ninth Congress dealing with 'socialist centralism' in the organisation of industry and its management (Sections VI-IX of the resolution on 'The Immediate Tasks of Economic Development'), with enlisting the masses in the work of administering industry (Section X) and with 'experts in industry'. In particular, in the sections dealing with socialist centralism the congress spoke of "Glavism" which was a feature of the period of War Communism (see note to p 214**) as a transitional form of organisation of industry, and declared that its principal defect consisted in the fact that 'the powerful vertical amalgamations (i.e. amalgamations of whole branches of industry from top to bottom) had become "isolated from each other and are connected only at the top by the Supreme Council of National Economy. The congress went on to declare that in connection with this "the organisational task is while preserving and developing vertical centralism along the lines of the Glavks, to combine it with the horizontal subordination of enterprises according to economic region in cases when the enterprises of various branches of industry and of varying economic importance are obliged to rely upon the same local sources of raw materials, transport, labour power, and so forth." While at the end of 1918, at a time when the territory of the Soviet Republic had become extremely constricted, the Second Congress of Councils of National Economy decided to abolish the regional economic bodies (see note to p 211*), the Ninth Party Congress "in the case of large districts, remotely situated from the centre and marked by specific economic conditions... considers it absolutely necessary to create in the immediate future strong and competent regional economic bodies based on representation from the appropriate state centres.

The Ninth Party Congress stressed the necessity as an integral part of the system of organization of industry and its administration "of bringing the administration of industry closer in line with the principle of individual management, and, for this purpose, establishing complete and unconditional individual management in the workshops and factory departments, proceeding

to introduce the principle of individual management in the factories and limit the boards in the middle and higher links of the administrative and production apparatus. The congress declared that 'at any rate an essential condition for economic organisation and the growth of production is the practical realisation of the oft proclaimed principle that a definite person should be definitely answerable for definite work. The corporate principle, wherever it may be practised in the process of deliberation or decision, must unconditionally give way to the individual principle in the process of execution. The degree of efficiency of any organisation must be measured by the extent to which duties, functions and responsibility are distributed within it. This entire section of the resolution (Section IX) was adopted by the Ninth Congress in the form in which it was proposed in the theses of the Central Committee. Thus the principle of individual management, which Lenin had advocated as early as the spring of 1918 in his pamphlet "The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government" (*Selected Works*, Vol VII) as a general principle of management of production in the transitional period a principle entirely compatible and combinable in practice with Soviet proletarian democracy, was adopted by the Ninth Congress as the basis of organisation of industrial management. The stubborn resistance put up by the opposition at the Ninth Congress (see note to p 76*) was smashed in spite of all its efforts to gain the support of the congress. The reports of Ossinsky and Rykov referred to above were oppositional reports—Ossinsky's on behalf of the 'Democratic Centralism Group' and Rykov's on behalf of an opposition group consisting of business leaders. The trade union opposition was represented by Tomsky. Other speakers belonging to these three opposition groups spoke in support of their leaders. The question of corporate or individual management assumed the central place among the questions of economic development covered by this point of the agenda. To this question Lenin's present speech on 'Economic Development' is almost entirely devoted. On the basis of a criticism of the views and proposals of the opposition he recapitulates the basic principles he had already developed in the "Report of the Central Committee" to this congress (pp 76-95 in this volume) emphasises the fact that the question had already been decided in principle two years previously in the resolution of the All Russian Central Executive Committee adopting his "Theses on the Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government" (see *Selected Works*, Vol VII note to p 313*), and points out that the opposition was "dragging us back theoretically". In this speech Lenin does not leave a stone standing of the petty bourgeois position of the opposition groups.

PAGE 220 * The meeting of the Communist fraction of the All Russian Central Council of Trade Unions referred to here was summoned on March 15 1920 for the purpose of discussing Tomsky's theses on the tasks of the trade unions and was attended by Lenin.

Tomsky in his theses advocated the principle of corporate management of

industrial enterprises, and was supported in this by the majority of the Communist fraction of the All Russian Central Council of Trade Unions. Tomsky's theses were countered by the theses of Bukharin, who advocated the principle of individual management. Lenin spoke several times at the meeting amending and criticising various points in Tomsky's theses. However, the fraction in the end declared itself opposed to individual management and, with slight amendments, adopted Tomsky's theses.

The record in the minutes of one of the speeches made by Lenin at this meeting of the fraction containing the fullest exposition of the main arguments advanced by Lenin against corporate management, is contained in *Collected Works*, Vol. XXV "Speech Delivered at a Meeting of the Communist Fraction of the All Russian Central Council of Trade Unions March 15, 1920".

PAGE 221 * The reference is to Lenin's theses entitled "The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government" adopted by the All Russian Central Executive Committee on April 29, 1918, in connection with his report (see *Selected Works*, Vol. VII, note to p. 313). * The theses will be found in *Collected Works*, Vol. XXII. Lenin's report was devoted to problems of socialist construction during the "respite" which began with the Brest-Litovsk Peace and which was interrupted by the revolt of the Czechoslovakians in May.

PAGE 223 * In making his report on the question of economic development at the Ninth Congress of the Russian Communist Party, Rykov advanced the following proposition:

"The first thing that must be done is to co-ordinate the policy of the Commissars in reality, in practice, and not only on paper and to amalgamate them with one or another of the Commissariats, it is immaterial whether they are amalgamated with the Supreme Council of National Economy, the People's Commissariat of Food, the People's Commissariat of Ways of Communication, the People's Commissariat of Agriculture, or any other."

In his speech in reply to the discussion, Rykov defended his point of view in the following way:

The chief objection brought forward here was made by Comrade Lenin who declared that we have the Council of Defence and the Council of People's Commissars for the purpose of co-ordinating activities. I pointed out that this was not enough, that an inter-departmental struggle was going on there which was wrecking this business. This body [i.e., a body uniting the economic Commissariats independently of the Council of Labour and Defence—Ed.] must possess administrative powers, state powers and state authority.

Rykov's political mistake lay in the proposal to create a political and economic centre distinct from the Council of People's Commissars and the Council of Labour and Defence. This was a dangerous proposal, because

to split up the centralised administration of the material resources of the country in time of war would inevitably have led to a breakdown in supplies to the Red Army. Moreover, economic policy would have been deprived of the flexibility which was essential in the rapidly changing circumstances of the civil war.

That is why the attempt of the Supreme Council of National Economy to form a sort of separate *bloc* of economic Commissariats outside the Council of Defence and the Council of People's Commissars was vigorously condemned by Lenin. The Ninth Party Congress rejected Rykov's proposal.

PAGE 226 * On the eve of the delivery of Lenin's speech on The Co-operatives at the Ninth Party Congress on April 2, a meeting of the Co-operative Commission of the congress was held, at which about three hundred delegates attended. Krestinsky delivered the report.

Surveying the development of the co-operatives since the October Revolution, Krestinsky came to the following conclusions: 'A single centralised communist distributive apparatus should be created, in which the predominant influence of the working class and the Communist Party should be ensured. The credit co-operatives and their alliances should be merged with the consumers co-operatives since, as a result of the devaluation of the currency, they were exclusively engaged in operations similar to those of the consumers' co-operatives. The agricultural and producers co-operatives should be merged with the consumers' co-operatives and be subordinated to the latter as their autonomous sections, while, economically, they should be under the control of the Supreme Council of National Economy and the People's Commissariat of Agriculture. Both in the centre and in the provinces the consumers co-operatives should be under the control of the People's Commissariat of Food.

Krestinsky's theses received only a few votes at the meeting of the Co-operative Commission. The majority adopted as a basis the theses of Milyutin who attempted to criticise Lenin's position from the "Left". Lenin supported Krestinsky's theses. The principles which Milyutin set up against Lenin were as follows: 1) "With the object of nationalising the co-operatives the management of the primary agricultural co-operatives should form part of the volost executive committees and be under the control of the latter, and 2) "The producing co-operatives (agricultural and special forms of co-operatives) should be entirely under the control of, and managed by appropriate organs of the Supreme Council of National Economy and the People's Commissariat of Agriculture and their local bodies."

Milyutin's pseudo-Left proposals in fact strengthened the position of the bourgeois co-operators and the kulaks. Nationalising the consumers co-operatives by placing their lower bodies in the rural districts under the control of the volost executive committees would not have solved the problem of ensuring the control of the Party over the co-operatives. The Party could gain control of the co-operatives only by increasing its influence among

the mass of the members of the co-operatives. This could be achieved only by persistent and systematic work and not by bureaucratically subordinating the co-operatives to the volost executive committees. Milyutin's proposal would have placed the producers co-operatives in the hands of the kulaks because it would have removed them from the influence and control of the workers and the poor and middle peasants belonging to the consumers co-operatives. The apparatus of the Supreme Council of National Economy and the People's Commissariat of Agriculture was not in a position to assert political control over the development of the producers co-operatives and to direct that development into communist channels. The producers co-operatives embraced the wealthier section of the agricultural population, and were therefore under the influence of the kulaks. The Ninth Party Congress rejected Milyutin's proposal by an overwhelming majority and adopted the resolution proposed by Krestinsky. The factor which determined the decision of the Ninth Congress was Lenin's present speech directed against Milyutin's position.

PAGE 231 * The Speech Delivered at the Third All Russian Congress of Textile Workers was made only two weeks after the conclusion of the Ninth Party Congress and is virtually an explanation intended for the working class masses of the principal problems raised by the Ninth Congress (see notes to p 76* and p 218*) the substance of which was as Lenin here says, the creation of a 'united labour front'

The Party, under the guidance of Lenin, had begun to create this 'united labour front' in January 1919, at the height of the civil war, in connection with the growing famine, the spread of typhus and the dislocation of transport it brought in its train. Then, as in 1920, the demand for a united labour front was set up against "the accursed maxim of capitalist society each for himself and the devil take the hindmost" (see 'Everybody on Food and Transport Work! pp 22-25 in this volume)

The conditions prevailing at the time of the Ninth Party Congress (see note to p 76*), necessitating as they did a concentration of effort and attention on economic development rendered the creation of a 'united labour front' still more urgent. The heroic self-sacrifice of the workers in the factories, the strictest labour discipline, universal compulsory labour service, the conversion of large sections of the Red Army into labour armies and communist subbotniks, were all component parts of the 'united labour front'.

The reasons for placing sections of the Red Army on labour service were also the reasons that led to the creation of other forms of 'the labour front', of which Lenin said the following "We must adopt new economic lines. We cannot disband our army because the enemy is still alive but we cannot refrain from utilising the forces at our disposal in order to combat disruption. The energy displayed in war must be displayed in a no less degree in the sphere of labour and in the same form. (*Collected Works* Vol. VV)

"Speech Delivered at the First Session of the Seventh All Russian Central Executive Committee, February 2, 1920) The peasants were drawn into the united labour front by means of compulsory labour and cartage service. Later, in December 1920, the Eighth Congress of Soviets declared that "the conduct of agriculture is a great state duty of the peasant population" The production bond with the peasantry along the lines of the united labour front was designed to take the form of cultural, agronomical and economic assistance, particularly by organising the proper utilisation of tractors and also "by using the labour power of the Red Army and the labour army to assist in harvest work and in tilling the fields"

According to Lenin, the success of the united labour front would depend on the class consciousness, heroism and enthusiasm of the advanced sections of the workers

PAGE 234.* The Sukharev Market—one of the largest in Moscow—carried on a semi legal existence during the period of civil war and the prohibition of private trade. In the figurative sense, the "Sukharev Market" denotes freedom of trade, bag trading and profiteering. The Sukharev Market has now been abolished

PAGE 238 * The "communist subbotniks" (Saturdays), as a new method of labour, were initiated by lower nuclei of the Communist Party for the purpose of combating economic disruption and assisting the defence of the country

One of the first organisations to carry out a subbotnik was the Moscow Section of the Moscow Kazan Railway. On May 7, 1919, a meeting of Communists and sympathisers employed on the line unanimously adopted a resolution in which it was stated "Communists and sympathisers must once more spur themselves and sacrifice another hour of their rest time for work, that is, increase their working day by one hour, combine these hours, and devote six hours on Saturday to physical labour the work being performed without pay. Communist subbotniks are to be introduced throughout the section until the final victory over Kolchak is won" At the subbotnik organised on May 10, 1919, the intensity of labour of the participants was 270 per cent above the normal intensity

The subbotniks very soon became widespread. In addition to the Party nuclei in industry, nuclei in the army and in Soviet institutions, and also non Party workers, Red Army men and employees took part in the subbotniks. Lenin regarded the subbotniks as a "great initiative" in smashing the old feudal and capitalist forms of labour and in the practical realisation of a higher form of labour, a form natural to communist society

"Is this not the beginning of a change of historic importance?" we read in an article entitled "The Great Initiative," written somewhat earlier in the year 1919, and dealing with the value and significance of the subbotniks. And it is from this point of view that Lenin in the present report to the Moscow City Party Conference regards the subbotniks. Later, in May 1920,

Lenin wrote another article (pp 244-46 in this volume) in which he again referred to the subbotniks as a communist form of labour

PAGE 244 * The article "From the First Subbotnik on the Moscow Kazan Rail way to the All Russian May Day Subbotnik" appeared as an editorial in a one day news-sheet of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party entitled *The May Day Subbotnik* set up and printed on the All Russian May Day Subbotnik (May 1, 1920) of which Lenin writes in this article This newspaper, incidentally, gave the following table, illustrating the development of subbotniks from May 1919 to April 1920 in Moscow

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

| 1919 | Communists | Non Communists | Total |
|-----------|------------|----------------|---------|
| May | 781 | — | 781 |
| June | 653 | — | 653 |
| July | 1,510 | 308 | 1 818 |
| August | 3,336 | 815 | 4,151 |
| September | 5 022 | 1,758 | 6,780 |
| October | 3,219 | 169 | 3,388 |
| November | 9,830 | 6 098 | 15,928 |
| December | 7 628 | 9 063 | 16,691 |
| 1920 | | | |
| January | 10,652 | 24,747 | 35,399 |
| February | 15 026 | 26,561 | 41,587 |
| March | 11,308 | 21,819 | 33 127 |
| April | 13,071 | 14,216 | 27,287 |
| Total | 82,076 | 105,554 | 187,590 |

In Leningrad, the communist subbotniks were even more widespread than in Moscow This was pointed out by Lenin in the speech at the Moscow City Conference of the Russian Communist Party on December 20, 1919 (pp 238-43 in this volume) Speaking of the spread of the communist subbotniks throughout the Soviet Republic, *The May Day Subbotnik* remarked :

"The subbotniks, which were begun last May on the initiative of the Communist railwaymen of the Moscow Station of the Moscow Kazan Railway, have gradually penetrated to the most remote corners of Soviet Russia"

The estimate of the movement given by Lenin in the present article develops and supplements the estimate of the communist subbotniks given in the speech preceding this article in the present volume

PAGE 247 * The Eighth Congress of Soviets, at which Lenin delivered this report on "The Work of the Council of People's Commissars," was held December 22-29, 1920 The end of 1920 and the beginning of 1921 marked a turn

ing point in the history of the Soviet Republic. The war with Poland had ended, Wrangel had been defeated, and this put an end to the last attempts at intervention and White Guard attacks on Soviet Russia at that period. The third peaceful respite, counting from the spring of 1918 had set in and this time it promised to be of much longer duration. As Lenin said at the time of the Eighth Congress of Soviets, during the discussion on the trade unions, the possibility had been created of a more durable transition from the war front to the labour front than was the case in the spring of 1920 at the time of the Ninth Party Congress when the transition to the labour front was very soon interrupted by the attacks of Poland and Wrangel organised by the Entente. With a longer respite and a more durable transition to the economic and labour front, the policy of War Communism, to which the war and economic destruction had given rise could no longer be preserved. The adoption of the New Economic Policy was soon to take place, which, as Lenin frequently said was fundamentally the old policy which he had outlined in the spring of 1918 in his pamphlet *The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government* and which had been adopted by the Party and the Soviet government (in the resolution of the All Russian Central Executive Committee of April 29 1918—see *Selected Works*, Vol VII note to p 313*). But of course this old policy had to undergo certain modifications in accordance with the changes that had taken place in the economic life and class relations of the country. It is noteworthy that in his report at the Eighth Congress of Soviets Lenin mentions the resolution passed by the All Russian Central Executive Committee of April 29 1918 in adoption of his theses on *The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government* pointing out that this resolution had not been rescinded and still remained our law. However the transition to the New Economic Policy was effected somewhat later, by the decisions of the Tenth Party Congress (March 1921). The Eighth Congress of Soviets took place at the turning point from the policy of War Communism to the New Economic Policy and this fact laid its impress on the labours and decisions of the congress.

Meeting at a time when economic dislocation was even greater than at the time of the Eighth Party Congress (the spring of 1919) and the Ninth Party Congress (the spring of 1920), attaining by the spring of 1921 the aspect of a very profound economic crisis, yet a time in which a "more durable transition to the labour front" was possible the Eighth Congress of Soviets devoted a large part of its labours to questions of economic development. After Lenin's report on the activities of the Central Committee, dealing almost entirely with questions of this kind, the congress proceeded to discuss the report of G. M. Krzhizhanovsky on the plan for the electrification of the country. This was followed by reports on the restoration of industry the restoration of transport, the development of agricultural production and assistance to peasant husbandry, and, finally—in close connection with economic problems—the improvement of the activities of Soviet bodies and methods of combating bureaucracy. But the chief questions discussed by the Eighth

Congress of Soviets were those to which Lenin drew attention in his report on the work of the Council of People's Commissars. These were the questions of concessions, the consolidation and development of peasant agriculture, the plan for the electrification of the country as a single economic plan and the methods of enlisting the broad mass of the workers and peasants in the work of economic development. The first two of these four main questions discussed by the congress reflected the turn in the state of affairs that marked the period in which the congress met.

To tolerate concessions was to a certain degree to tolerate capitalism in the form of state capitalism (*cf.* the pamphlet *The Food Tax*, the chapter entitled "The Food Tax, Free Trade and Concessions," *Selected Works* Vol IX), and this was one of the essential elements of the New Economic Policy. Lenin during that period, just as in the period of the New Economic Policy, devoted a great deal of attention to the question of concessions, a decree on which was issued by the Council of People's Commissars on November 23, 1920 (see note to p 279*). Later on in this volume (pp 279-98) is reproduced a long report on concessions made by Lenin at a meeting of secretaries of the Moscow Party nader. This report was made before the Eighth Congress of Soviets, and on the eve of the opening of the Fifth Congress of Soviets Lenin made another comprehensive report on concessions to the Communist fraction of the congress and further dealt with this question at the congress itself in his report on the work of the Council of People's Commissars.

The question of peasant farming was raised at the congress in connection with the endorsement of the legislative bill of the Council of People's Commissars on 'Measures for Consolidating and Developing Peasant Farming' (see note to p 263*). A characteristic feature of this bill one to which Lenin devoted particular attention in his report, is the combination of the state regulation of peasant farming (planning on the basis of sowing assignments to gubernias, uyezds, volosts and villages, and even to individual peasant farms), on the one hand, with encouragement to the "assiduous peasant" (*i.e.* the middle peasant) and his personal initiative in the fulfilment of the assignments of the government, on the other. This encouragement to the "assiduous peasant" referred to in the bill was clearly reflected in the slogan advanced by Lenin when defending and supporting the New Economic Policy, namely, to appeal to the "personal interests" and the "personal advantage of the small peasant (the middle peasant) in such a way as to lead him, as a toiler, and to advance together with him towards socialism. To this circle of ideas connected with the adoption of the New Economic Policy belongs the statement made by Lenin in his report to the Fifth Congress of Soviets to the effect that in the rural districts it was necessary to begin "with measures that are absolutely essential, urgent and fully accessible and comprehensible to the peasant." Lenin frequently repeated this in defending and supporting the New Economic Policy.

It was at the time of the Eighth Congress of Soviets, in December 1920, during the discussion on the trade unions, that Lenin said that at a time

when a more durable transition from the military front to the labour front was possible 'the attitude of the class of the proletariat to the class of the peasantry was already changing and that it was necessary to examine this very carefully. This was already reflected in the bill on "Measures for Consolidating and Developing Peasant Farming"—although the food quotas which were characteristic of War Communism, had not yet been abolished. And it was not without good reason that, in his reply to the discussion on the report to the Tenth Party Congress on the food tax, Lenin said that between the adoption of the food tax and the sowing campaign of the spring of 1921 which was carried out on the basis of the bill ratified by the Eighth Congress of Soviets "there was on the whole economic harmony, and not contradiction."

The general significance of the law on 'Measures for Consolidating and Developing Peasant Farming' was that it laid the basis for planning peasant farming by regulating sowing. In this connection, the sowing campaigns of the present day, which play so important a part in the socialist reconstruction of agriculture, in spite of the vast differences which distinguish them (the extensive socialist sector of agriculture—the state farms and the collective farms) take their origin in the sowing campaign of 1921 developed in accordance with the law adopted by the Eighth Congress of Soviets.

The third important question dealt with by Lenin in his report to the Eighth Congress of Soviets on the work of the Council of People's Commissars was the plan of electrification drawn up by the Goelro (the State Commission for the Electrification of Russia for which see the article "A Single Economic Plan," and the corresponding note, in this volume). On this question the congress adopted the resolution proposed by Lenin thanking the Goelro for its labours and instructing the All Russian Central Executive Committee, the Council of Labour and Defence and the Presidium of the Supreme Council of National Economy to complete the elaboration of the plan of the Goelro and to endorse it unconditionally doing so in the shortest possible time. As will be seen from Lenin's report he attached extreme importance to the plan of the Goelro. His formula "Communism is the Soviet power plus the electrification of the whole country" shows as clearly as anything what electrification meant to Lenin. The plan of the Goelro, adopted in a concrete and, for that time, perfected form by the Ninth Congress of Soviets, i.e., a year after the Eighth Congress of Soviets and under the New Economic Policy, and subsequently improved and developed to conform with the tremendous sweep of industrialisation and socialist reconstruction of the national economy—this plan for the electrification of the country, drawn up under the guidance of Lenin, to this day forms the basis of the socialist reconstruction of the economic life of the Soviet Union. It is obvious that only under the New Economic Policy could it develop in the course of practical application so as to occupy the important place which it came to occupy in the First Five Year Plan and which it now occupies in the Second Five Year Plan (see note to p. 299*). Thus the resolution on the plan of the Goelro adopted

by the Eighth Congress was also a reflection of the turning point that marked the period in which the Eighth Congress met

The plan of the Gosplan laid the basis for the planned construction of socialism in the U.S.S.R. Lenin in his report on the work of the Council of People's Commissars at the Eighth Congress defended this plan against the carping critics and sceptics who doubted the possibility of drawing up plans for many years ahead. He unfolded before the congress a whole system of ideas on methods of planning national economy and carrying out these plans (pp 247-78 in this volume). At the Sixteenth Party Congress, Stalin referring to this passage in Lenin's report at the Eighth Congress of Soviets pointed out that even at the present day the Central Committee of the Party is following in matters of planning the road pointed out by Lenin altering and improving the Five Year Plan reducing periods and increasing the rates of construction. The way to plan outlined by Lenin at the Eighth Congress of Soviets does indeed contain all the principal methods of national economic planning employed today such as drawing up plans for the smallest production units based on the general plan, testing the plan in the process of execution in the localities and reducing periods as a result of the checks kept on the fulfilment of the plan.

Such is the significance which Lenin at the Eighth Congress, and the congress under his guidance, attached to that most important achievement of socialist construction, planning.

The more durable transition from the military front to the labour and economic front necessitated the enlistment of the broad masses of the workers and peasants (the poor and middle peasants) in the work of economic development, and the methods of so enlisting them accordingly constituted the fourth important question discussed at the congress. In his report, in addition to the three main questions already described in this note, Lenin also systematically dealt with this fourth question. The way in which he defined the question and answered it is noteworthy. He proposed a combination of persuasion and compulsion, directed against the "vacillations and reversions to the old slackness of will and petty bourgeois ideology, not only among the peasant masses but also among the working class. Lenin declares "state compulsion in relation to the peasantry, based on persuasion, to be a task of the day (see p 263 in this volume) in connection with the decree on 'Measures for Consolidating and Developing Agriculture'. At a first glance this may appear to be contradictory to everything Lenin said—in connection with the slogan of an agreement, an alliance, with the middle peasants—at the period of the Eighth Party Congress about the inadmissibility of employing coercion with regard to the middle peasant. But, of course, there is no contradiction here at all. Subsequently, at the time of the New Economic Policy, Lenin said at the All Russian Party Conference in May 1921 "That, at a time of transition from capitalism to communism, with a population the majority of which consists of peasants, they should give you the food tax without compulsion is a kind of 'communism' which, as far as I know, does

not yet exist. And this was said in connection with such a measure as the adoption of the food tax which was designed to strengthen the alliance with the middle peasant. Unlike the Lefts, Lenin categorically rejected and condemned compulsion, coercion, dictation in matters affecting the transition of the middle peasant from individual farming to collective farming. But unlike the Right opportunists, he also categorically insisted that the middle peasant should strictly fulfil his obligations to the proletarian state and that all manifestations of petty bourgeois sentiments in the fulfilment of the tasks imposed upon the peasantry by the state should be vigorously combated. Demanding that labour discipline should be unconditionally observed by the proletariat and that manifestations of petty bourgeois slackness among the workers should be combated, Lenin made the same demands in connection with the fulfilment of state obligations by the peasants on the labour and food fronts. But here, too, in contradistinction to the efforts of the *Lefts* and to

Left distortions in practice, he drew a sharp line between the policy towards the middle peasant and the policy towards the kulak, categorically rejecting the application to the middle peasant of the methods used in combating the kulak. What Lenin demanded was compulsion based on persuasion in the fulfilment of state assignments on the labour front and in particular in the matter of deliveries of grain to the state (at that time on the lines of food quotas, but subsequently on the lines of the food tax).

PAGE 248 * Baron Wrangel, one of Denikin's generals, in the spring of 1920 assumed command of the remnants of the White Guard armies, which had entrenched themselves in the Crimea with the diplomatic and military support of the Entente powers. The war with Poland which began shortly after this diverted a large part of the forces of the Red Army to the West and Wrangel, supplied with munitions by France, was able to assume the offensive. Wrangel's attempts to invade the Don and Kuban regions were repulsed. After an armistice had been concluded with Poland on October 12, 1920, the destruction of Wrangel's army was undertaken. On October 30 Perekop was taken and on November 15 Wrangel fled to Constantinople.

PAGE 252 * The Councils of Action in Great Britain were organised by the workers in 1920 during the advance of the Red Army on Warsaw. The decision to form the Councils of Action was taken at a conference of political parties and trade unions held in London for the purpose of countering the aggressive policy of the British government towards Soviet Russia.

Through the Councils of Action the workers were able to bring pressure to bear on the British government in the matter of the trade agreement with Soviet Russia, which was signed in March 1921 (see note to p. 252**).

PAGE 252 ** The reference is to the British government's note of July 1, 1920, outlining the conditions for the establishment of trade relations between Great Britain and the Soviet Republic. This note contained demands rather

unusual in international practice. For instance, the British government demanded the right to veto members of Soviet trade and other delegations to Great Britain.

On July 7 the Soviet government addressed a note to London in the main accepting the conditions set forth by the British government and specifying the debts and losses which might be the subject of mutual compensation. In spite of this reply the British government broke off negotiations on the trade agreement and began to lend energetic support to Poland in the war against the Soviet Republic. It was not until March 16 1921, that the first trade agreement was concluded and it was only on February 8, 1924, that Great Britain recognised the USSR *de jure*.

PAGE 256 * The Council of Labour and Defence arose out of the Council of Workers and Peasants' Defence formed at the end of 1918 in accordance with the decision of the All Russian Central Executive Committee of November 30 of that year. This decision endowed the Council of Workers and Peasants' Defence with 'plenary powers in mobilising the forces and resources of the country in the interests of defence. At the beginning of April 1920 during the second respite (see note to p 76*), when part of the armed forces of the country were transformed into labour armies, and the attempt was made, on the basis of the decisions of the Ninth Party Congress, to change from the military front to the economic front, the Council of Workers and Peasants' Defence was transformed into the Council of Labour and Defence. This change was definitely formulated at the Eighth Congress of Soviets, which adopted the Statutes of the Council of Labour and Defence submitted for its approval by the All Russian Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars. According to these statutes the Council of Labour and Defence was to function as a commission of the Council of People's Commissars and was "to draw up a single economic plan for the R.S.F.S.R. and submit it for ratification to the All Russian Central Executive Committee to direct the activities of the economic People's Commissariats in accordance with this plan, to supervise the manner of its fulfilment and, where necessary, to sanction departures from this plan."

In accordance with the statutes of the Council of Labour and Defence it was to consist of the Commissars of Military Affairs, Labour, Ways of Communication, Agriculture, Food, and Workers and Peasants' Inspection, the Chairman of the Supreme Council of National Economy and a representative from the All Russian Central Council of Trade Unions. The Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars was to act as the Chairman of the Council of Labour and Defence.

PAGE 261 * The central and local Bureaus of Production Propaganda and the nuclei in the factories for improving production were created in 1920 and 1921 for the purpose of increasing productivity of labour and enhancing revolutionary labour discipline. The object of production propaganda was

to inculcate a responsible and enlightened attitude in every department of a factory and in every rural district to the fulfilment of the general economic plan adopted by the Ninth Party Congress and the plan of the Compro adopted by the Eighth Congress of Soviets (see notes to p 246* and p 299*) Factory meetings, conferences of related enterprises, etc., were summoned with the object of improving production processes and the organisation of work discussing production programmes, plans, and so on Literature was published and the theatres were utilised for the purpose Production propaganda was chiefly carried on by the trade unions The work was guided by the agitation and propaganda departments of the Party

PAGE 263 * The reference is to the bill proposed by the Council of People's Commissars entitled "Measures for Consolidating and Developing Peasant Farming" and adopted by the Eighth Congress of Soviets The bill provided for "preparing and carrying out the agricultural campaign in 1921 in accordance with a uniform plan and under unified control It demanded that 'all agriculturists should fully sow their land in accordance with the assignment of the government and should cultivate it properly in accordance with the example shown by the best and most assiduous husbandmen among the middle and poor peasants. It instituted the granting of rewards in kind to village communities, collective farms and individual "assiduous husbandmen" who fulfilled the state assignments in an exemplary way and improved their farms

The state sowing plan was drawn up by the People's Commissariat of Agriculture Local committees were set up to supervise the extension of the sowing area and the cultivation of the land Peasants' committees were elected in the villages for improving agricultural production, the chairmen of the village Soviets acting as the chairmen of these committees While assigning the amounts of land that it was obligatory to sow, the Soviet government took measures for assisting the peasants with tractors, improved agricultural implements repair shops, grain cleaning stations, hiring stations and breeding stations, by setting the labour army and the Red Army to help in the fields by organising agricultural propaganda and education, and so forth

PAGE 268 * Lenin is referring to 'The Provisional Law on Rewards in Kind issued on October 23, 1920, establishing the following system of rewards: a factory which fulfilled its programme 200 per cent received the full reward fund assigned; a factory which fulfilled its programme 170 per cent received 85 per cent of the reward fund, and so on The reward was divided among the workers of the factory depending on the extent to which each exceeded his assigned rate of output A worker who fulfilled his assigned output 150 per cent received 25 per cent of the full reward; for fulfilling his assigned output 200 per cent, he received 50 per cent of the full reward; for fulfilling his assigned output 250 per cent, he received 75 per cent of the full reward; and for fulfilling his assigned output 300 per cent, he received 100 per cent of the full reward

PAGE 269 * According to Rykov's theses, which served as a basis for the report on industry he delivered to the Eighth Congress of Soviets the output of fuel increased in the following way the output of coal for the whole of 1919 amounted to about 37,000,000 poods (60 poods roughly equal one ton), and for the first ten months of 1920 to 341,000,000 poods the output of peat in 1919 amounted to 67,000,000 poods, while for the first ten months of 1920 it amounted to 82,000,000 poods wood fuel was prepared to the amount of 4,200,000 cubic sazhen (a sazhen roughly equals seven feet) in 1919 and to the amount of 9,400,000 cubic sazhen in the first ten months of 1920 The increase was still more marked in the case of liquid fuel Thus, while not more than 50,000,000 poods of liquid fuel of all kinds (including even lubricating oils) were used in 1919 116,900,000 poods of liquid fuel had already been transported to Central Russia in the first ten months of 1920 not counting refined oils and lubricating oils

PAGE 271 * Order No 1042 of the People's Commissariat of Ways of Communication issued on May 22 1920, contained a plan for the repair of locomotives designed to cover a period of five years As a result of the Imperialist war and the civil war 60 per cent of the 16,000 locomotives covered by the order were in need of repair A similar order, No 1157, was issued with regard to the repair of railway cars

PAGE 271 ** By the time of the Eighth Congress of Soviets it had already become clear that Order No 1042 on the repair of locomotives and Order No 1157 on the repair of railway cars (see the preceding note) were being fulfilled at a greater rate than was provided for in the plans drawn up in the spring of 1920 This made it possible to shorten the period of fulfilment of these orders from five years to three and a half and even three years

PAGE 275 * In 1919, Preobrazhensky and Bukharin published a book entitled *The ABC of Communism* expounding and explaining the Party programme in popular form It is to this book that Lenin is here referring

PAGE 279 * This 'Speech Delivered at a Meeting of Nuclei Secretaries of the Moscow Organisation of the R C P, November 26, 1920,' is entirely devoted to the question of concessions It preceded the report delivered by Lenin to the Eighth Congress of Soviets (pp 247-78 in this volume) in which Lenin dealt with the same question, and was made in connection with the decree on concessions of November 23, 1920 This decree sanctioned foreign concessions in the Soviet Republic for the first time and defined the conditions which were to govern these concessions and which were to ensure the concessions really serving the interests of socialist development of the republic Several months later when the New Economic Policy was adopted in the spring of 1921, concessions were included in the general scheme of this policy as one of the most marked varieties of state capitalism in the proletarian

tarian state This was a form of capitalism which was sanctioned by the proletarian dictatorship itself and which the latter while sanctioning so controlled that as Lenin put it at the Eleventh Party Congress, 'it could and dared not step beyond the limits and conditions set for it by the proletarian conditions that were advantageous to the proletariat' (Reply to the Discussion on the Report on the Activities of the Central Committee *Collected Works*, Vol XXVII) The sanctioning of this form of capitalism in the proletarian state was nothing but a particular form of the class struggle waged by the proletariat against the bourgeoisie and in the present case when it was a question of concessions granted to foreign capitalists a particular form of the struggle against the imperialist bourgeoisie of the capitalist countries It is from this standpoint that Lenin treats concessions in this speech referring to them as a continuation of the war against the capitalist world in a new form an economic form, as a new war which will be useful for us in all respects," but also one in which not the slightest yielding is permissible' Dwelling briefly on the importance of concessions for the restoration of the economic life of the country for obtaining products, for carrying out the plan of electrification and pointing out that "economically, we have a vast deal to gain from concessions, Lenin in his speech drew attention to the chief significance of concessions as a new form of war against the imperialists This attitude of Lenin's towards concessions, which expressed the general views on state capitalism in a proletarian state as developed by him in the spring of 1918 (see *Selected Works* Vol VII, 'Left Wing Childishness and Petty Bourgeois Mentality') and later in 1921 and 1922, in his articles and speeches on the New Economic Policy (*Selected Works* Vol IX) differs as heaven from earth from the liberal attitude of the Right opportunists to concessions and to other varieties of state capitalism

Concessions never played an important part in the economic life of the Soviet Union From 1921 to October 1, 1928, 2,400 proposals for concessions were received but only 178 concessionary agreements were concluded including 31 agreements for technical assistance On October 1 1928 there were still in operation concessionary agreements governing 68 enterprises with a capital of 61,500,000 rubles and employing 20,000 persons The number of proposals for concessions fluctuated from year to year with an obvious tendency to decline The same is true of the number of concessionary agreements actually concluded More important than the concessions were the contracts signed for a period of three to five years

PAGE 280 * Lenin is referring to a book by William Hard entitled *Raymond Robins' Own Story* published in 1920 in New York and London and containing a description of R Robins' sojourn in Soviet Russia Robins was a member of the American Red Cross Commission in Russia and witnessed the October Revolution and the early period of the Soviet government When he left for America on May 14 1918 Lenin gave him a note to Soviet officials to assist him in his journey to Vladivostok

PAGE 285 * Lenin is referring to Vanderlip's book *What Happened to Europe?* published in New York in 1920, after Vanderlip's return from Soviet Russia

PAGE 289 * The reference is to J. Maynard Keynes' *The Economic Consequences of the Peace*

PAGE 292 * *The Peoples of the East* was the organ of the Council of Propaganda and Action of the Peoples of the East. It appeared in Russian, Turkish, Persian and Arabic. The first issue was devoted to the First Congress of the Peoples of the East held September 18, 1920 in Baku and contained the principal speeches, reports and theses of the congress.

PAGE 293 * Lenin is referring to the report delivered by the Menshevik Noah Jordania at a congress of the Georgian National Guard held on October 26, 1920 and published in the Georgian Menshevik newspaper *Ertoba* of October 30 and 31, 1920. Touching on the relations between Great Britain and Soviet Russia, Jordania said: "You know that today two worlds are facing each other: on the one hand Europe and on the other Bolshevik Russia and in part certain Asiatic peoples and states. Bolshevik Russia is leading the revolts of these peoples and states against Western Europe."

Ertoba (*Unity*) was a daily newspaper, the organ of the Central Committee of the Social Democratic (Menshevik) Party of Georgia and was published in Tiflis from 1917 to 1921.

PAGE 294 * Lenin, in speaking of the 200,000,000,000 rubles which Soviet Russia might be called upon to pay to the imperialist powers if the intervention were successful, is referring to the usual predatory contributions imposed by capitalist states on defeated countries, an example of which was the plundering of Germany after the imperialist war of 1914-18. The debts to which Lenin further refers were the foreign loans floated by the tsarist government and the Provisional Government amounting in all to 11,600,000,000 rubles, and annulled by the Soviet government immediately after the October Revolution.

PAGE 296 * The reference is to a part of the stenographic report of a speech delivered by Lenin at a conference of chairmen of the uyezd volost and village executive committees of the Moscow Gubernia held on October 15, 1920. The speech was published in *Pravda*, No. 232, October 17, 1920. Lenin's general opinion of the unsatisfactory nature of the stenographic reports of his speeches will be found in *Collected Works*, Vol. XXIV, "The Successes and Difficulties of the Soviet Government" and Vol. XXVII, Preface to *The New Economic Policy*.

PAGE 297 * The reference is to the pamphlet *Concessions: The Decree of the Council of People's Commissars of November 23, 1920. Text of the Decree. Concessionary Objects*. Maps, State Publishing House, 1920.

PAGE 299 * The article *A Single Economic Plan* was written by Lenin in February 1921 and published in *Pravda* No 39 February 22 1921. It was devoted to a defence of the plan for the electrification of the country drawn up by the Goelro (State Commission for the Electrification of Russia) under the guidance of Lenin in 1920 and endorsed in principle by the Eighth Congress of Soviets. The article was directed against the intellectual and bureaucratic conceit of certain Soviet 'bigwig' and Communist journalists who were hampering the work of completing the compilation and endorsement of the plan of the Goelro which had been entrusted by the Eighth Congress of Soviets to the All Russian Central Executive Committee, the Council of People's Commissars, the Council of Labour and Defence and the Presidium of the Supreme Council of National Economy (see note to p 246*). Lenin defended the plan of the Goelro as 'the only scientific plan' and as one which was at the same time not only a plan for the electrification of the country but also a plan of economic and socialist development in general—a single economic plan. Lenin in this article gives a number of valuable directions on how such a plan was to be worked on—not by giving way to Communist conceit but by actually fulfilling the duties of a 'Communist journalist and Soviet administrator, and how, in particular, to correct the economic plan on the basis of a study of the practical experience gained in the centre and in the localities. Some time after this article was written the consistent Leninist, Stalin, in a letter to Lenin which was later published in the Soviet press like Lenin expressed his indignation at the chatter, the banal and noxious chatter, the childish prattle of those who were drawing up plans in addition to that of the Goelro like Lenin, he said that there existed only one 'single economic plan—the plan of electrification and like Lenin, and unlike the "Communist journalists, of whom Lenin wrote, he demanded that "not one more minute must be wasted on chatter about the plan—he proposed that "practical work should be undertaken immediately and that "people with live experience should be enlisted in the work (i.e. put on the planning commission) finally like Lenin, he insisted on wide propaganda being undertaken on behalf of the plan of the Goelro. The 'routine, of which Stalin wrote in his letter in reference to Rykov the 'bureaucratic conceit of the "bigwigs which Lenin flays in this article were finally broken. At the Ninth Congress of Soviets, held at the end of December 1921, the plan of the Goelro assumed the form of concrete instructions.

It will be seen from the report on the work of the Council of People's Commissars delivered to the Eighth Congress of Soviets (pp 247-78 in this volume) that Lenin regarded the fulfilment of the plan of electrification as a condition for the "final victory of socialism in Soviet Russia. Only when the country has been electrified shall we be finally victorious. Lenin declared at the Eighth Congress. The plan for the electrification of the country dealt a crushing blow at the Trotskyist theory that it is impossible to build socialism in one country, in Soviet Russia in particular. This plan

as Stalin points out in the letter to Lenin referred to, was beyond comparison with the paltry plan which Trotsky that primitive mediæval handicrafts man' gave in his original theses on 'The Immediate Tasks of Economic Development at the Time of the Ninth Congress of Soviets, which were revised by the Central Committee before they became the theses submitted to the congress in the name of the Central Committee (regarding the final theses of the Central Committee, see note to p 218*) The plan of the Goelro was in fact intended to create the conditions for the victory of socialism in Soviet Russia, by placing industry, agriculture and transport on the technical basis of large scale industry and by serving to unite the economic activities of the country into a single whole led by socialist industry That is why the plan of electrification drawn up by the Goelro, with the amendments necessitated by the economic achievements gained in the restoration period of the New Economic Policy—including the extent of fulfilment of the plan itself—and by the aims of the reconstruction period, became an integral part of the First Five Year Plan With the fulfilment of the First Five Year Plan in four years, the plan of electrification was more than fulfilled The plan of the Goelro proposed that the total capacity, of both the existing and the new electric power stations, should be increased to 2 700,000 kw by the end of 1932 Actually, the total capacity of the electric power stations had already reached 2,900 000 kw by December 1930 and 4,700,000 kw by December 1932 The plan of the Goelro provided that the total capacity of the regional electric power stations should amount to 1 750 000 kw by the end of 1932 Actually the total capacity of the regional stations by the end of 1932 had reached 2,700 000 kw with a total output of electric energy of 8 000 000 000 kwh. By the end of the period of the Second Five Year Plan the capacity of all the electric power stations in the Soviet Union is to total 20 000 000 kw with a total output of 100,000,000,000 kwh

PAGE 302 * The reference is to the book by Atlanticus (a pseudonym of Professor Ballod) *The Future State, Production and Distribution in the Socialist State*, published in 1898 The book was devoted to proving the possibility of creating a socialist system on the basis of the level of development of productive forces as it existed towards the end of the nineteenth century A large part of the book was devoted to the problem of the technical basis of the socialist economic system

PAGE 303 * The principal purpose of the State General Planning Commission (Gosplan) instituted on February 22 1921, was defined as follows 'A general planning commission shall be set up under the Council of Labour and Defence for the purpose of drawing up a single general state economic plan on the basis of the plan of electrification endorsed by the Eighth Congress of Soviets, and of exercising general supervision over the fulfilment of this plan The most urgent economic tasks must be worked out by the general planning commission or its subcommissions in the fullest possible

detail and with due regard for the conditions of the given economic situation

The original staff of the Gosplan consisted of the majority of the members of the Goelro. Lenin followed the work of the Gosplan keenly and directed it by means of frequent written and verbal instructions to its chairman, Krzhizhanovsky

PAGE 311 * The Report on Revising the Programme and Name of the Party the resolution On Changing the Name of the Party and the Party Programme the 'Proposal Regarding the Revision of the Programme of the Party the Rough Draft of a Programme,' the report On the Party Programme, and the "Reply to the Discussion on the Party Programme" reproduced in Part IV of this volume constitute valuable material for a study of the manner in which Lenin guided the drawing up of the programme of the Russian Communist Party, the direct part he took in this work and his views on the formulation of the main questions in the Party programme. The study of these writings and teachings of Lenin should be combined with the study of 'Materials Relating to the Revision of the Party Programme' written in 1917 and reproduced in *Selected Works* Vol VI. In the April Theses of 1917 (see *Selected Works*, Vol VI, 'The Tasks of the Proletariat in the Present Revolution' Thesis 9), Lenin already spoke of the necessity of revising the Party programme. He prepared a draft of changes (see *Selected Works* Vol VI, pp 106-11) to be introduced into the existing programme of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party, which had been adopted at its Second Congress in 1903 and submitted this draft to the All Russian Party Conference held in April 1917. This conference set up a commission for the purpose of revising the programme but, owing to lack of time it was unable to complete its labours on the programme (see *Selected Works* Vol VI note to p 105*). After this conference, Lenin, on the instructions of the Central Committee, prepared and published a pamphlet entitled *Materials Relating to the Revision of the Party Programme* (*Selected Works*, Vol VI) which contained, in addition to the materials of the April Conference, Lenin's finished draft of a new programme. This pamphlet was published for the purpose of having the question of the revision of the programme discussed by the branches of the Party. The discussion on the whole developed along the same lines as at the April Conference along the lines that is, of a struggle against the Left deviation over the question of the nature of imperialism. The chief advocate of the Left tendency in the discussion was Bukharin who continued to hold the position he had occupied during the imperialist war, advocating the anti Leninist views on the national question which, in the main had been held by Rosa Luxemburg (see *Selected Works*, Vol V note to p 3 * p 267* and p 290*). Bukharin, who had a wrong conception of imperialism, even at that time showed that he did not understand the law of the uneven development of capitalism in the period of imperialism and, in this connection that he denied as did Trotsky and the Trotskyists, the pos-

sibility of the victory of socialism in one country alone. He underrated, in general, the importance of the fight for democratic demands in the period of imperialism, rejected the slogan of the right of nations to self-determination and was guilty of semi-anarchistic errors on the question of the state. In all the subsequent disputes on the question of the programme Bukharin held to these erroneous views, views he had come to adopt in the period of the war.

As early as August 1917, after the publication of Lenin's pamphlet *Materials Relating to the Revision of the Party Programme*, Bukharin advanced the proposal that the programme should no longer be divided into a minimum programme and a maximum programme (see note to p. 321*) and that the description of capitalism, which Lenin proposed to take from the old programme, should be discarded. Bukharin wrote that the theoretical part of the programme should be revised and should include a general analysis of the era of finance capital on a world scale. The theoretical part of the programme should therefore give not a description of capitalism in general but a description of *modern* world capitalism with all its bloody contradictions and symptoms of approaching collapse. Furthermore, Bukharin, in his description of imperialism, spoke of it as '*organised monopoly capital*', that is, more or less as he spoke of it later, in 1929, when he figured as the leader of Right opportunist vacillation in the Party and the Communist International. And Bukharin combined this Right opportunist conception of imperialism with Left deductions in respect to the programme of the Party. He completely forgot the fact that in all countries, and especially in Russia, the imperialist era had preserved the capitalist relations of the preceding era of development of capitalism, and even pre-capitalist relations—survivals of feudalism, small scale production, particularly peasant production, and so forth. In his pamphlet *Materials Relating to the Revision of the Party Programme* already referred to, Lenin vigorously criticised this approach to imperialism and the proposal that the general programme should confine itself to a description of imperialism. He reminded the Lefts that there is no such thing as pure imperialism and that in fact imperialism does not and cannot reconstruct capitalism from top to bottom, and that therefore to construct the programme on the assumption that there is such a thing as pure imperialism would be theoretically false.

Having pictured a pure imperialism, Bukharin and those who thought like him conceived the world socialist revolution as a pure socialist revolution. They did not understand that the world socialist revolution "cannot come about except in the form of an epoch of proletarian civil war against the bourgeoisie in the advanced countries combined with a whole series of democratic and revolutionary movements, including movements for national liberation in the undeveloped, backward and oppressed nations" (*Selected Works*, Vol. V, *A Caricature of Marxism and Imperialist Economism*). Disregarding the uneven development of capitalism in the various countries, they pictured the socialist revolution as a simultaneous collapse of the whole capitalist

system all over the world, under the simultaneous blows of the united proletariat of all countries. They had an extremely simplified idea of the process of development of the world revolution. They considered that the revolution in Russia would be immediately followed by the victory of the socialist revolution in other countries and if this did not occur immediately, the revolution in Russia was inevitably doomed to failure or to degeneration. In 1918 these views were vividly expressed in the position taken up by the

Left Communists, headed by Bukharin on the question of the Brest Litovsk Peace and on the methods of socialist development in Soviet Russia (see *Selected Works*, Vol VII report on "War and Peace and Left Wing Childishness and Petty Bourgeois Mentality," and the corresponding notes). Lenin's views on the possibility of the imperialist chain being broken, the victory of the socialist revolution consolidated, and socialism triumphing at first in one country alone were regarded by Bukharin and Pyatakov as incorrect. Denying the importance of the national question, and underrating the importance of the movement of the non proletarian and semi proletarian toiling masses, and hence of the poor and middle peasants, in the era of imperialism, they were unable to find a correct solution for the problem of the allies of the proletariat in the socialist revolution before and after the victory of the proletariat. They did not seek for allies within the country; they saw an ally only outside the country—the international proletariat. And, therefore, like Trotsky and the Trotskyists, they greatly underrated the role of the proletariat as the leader of the toilers, and also underrated the internal forces of the revolution. This entirely followed from their conception of the era of imperialism as an era of thoroughly pure imperialism. Since imperialism was thoroughly pure imperialism, only two contending forces were of importance—the proletariat and the imperialist bourgeoisie. All the rest was without significance or importance. Nor were the allies of the proletariat in the rural districts important. That is why the fight against the "Left" opportunist views of Bukharin and Pyatakov on the question of imperialism and its trend of development was of such vast importance for the working out of a correct strategical and tactical line for the Party. This incorrect view of imperialism and the conditions for the collapse of capitalism, this tendency to ignore still existing stages of development, was also reflected in the proposal made by Bukharin and V. M. Smirnov in 1917 before the October Revolution, to discard the minimum programme, that is, the demands of the proletariat and its party under the bourgeois society and state. Objecting to this point of view, Lenin at that time wrote: "It is ridiculous to discard the minimum programme, which is indispensable while we still live within the framework of bourgeois society, while we have not yet destroyed this framework, nor yet realised the basic prerequisites for a transition to socialism, nor yet smashed the enemy, the bourgeoisie, and even if we have smashed them, not yet annihilated them." (*Collected Works* Vol XXI, 'Towards the Revision of the Party Programme')

The question of revising the Party programme arose again at the Seventh

Party Congress in 1918, after the victory of the proletarian revolution in Russia. The differences regarding the minimum programme had now virtually ceased. In so far as they still existed, they had taken a different form. In the report, reproduced here which Lenin delivered to the congress on the revision of the programme, he gave a profound and realistic analysis of the state of affairs and declared that it was too early to renounce the use of bourgeois parliamentarism (see p. 321 in this volume) since it could not be said that the revolution might not be thrown back. This cautious attitude was entirely in place at that period since the position of the Soviet Republic at the time of the Seventh Party Congress was still an uncertain one.

The differences relative to the method of constructing the programme and the description of capitalism and imperialism still remained. Bukharin again came forward with his old proposals. Moreover, he proposed "that a description of the socialist system in its developed form, a description of communism, should be given, and that the system of transitional measures should be indicated on this basis."

These proposals were also vigorously opposed by Lenin. He considered that "the programme is a description of what we have begun to do and of the next steps we desire to take, and that, therefore, to indulge in cogitations on the developed socialist society was mistaken and futile." "We are at present unconditionally in favour of the state," Lenin said, "and to say that a description should be given of socialism in its developed form, where there will be no state—you cannot conceive of anything else here except that the principle from each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs will then be realised. But that is still a long way off, and to say that is to say nothing, except that the soil under our feet is loose." (*Collected Works*, Vol. XXII, "Objections to Bukharin's Amendment to the Resolution on the Party Programme.")

The Seventh Party Congress was unable to discuss the question of the programme in detail, and adopted a resolution providing that the theoretical section of the programme should be altered and supplemented by a description of imperialism and the era of the beginning of the socialist revolution, that a fuller and more detailed description should be given of the new type of state and of the economic and other reforms begun by the Soviet government, and that the immediate tasks should be set forth.

At the Eighth Party Congress, which had for its consideration a draft of a programme compiled under the direct guidance of Lenin, lengthy discussions developed on the preamble to the programme and on the national question. Bukharin adhered to his old point of view, and declared that the preamble to the old programme with its description of capitalism and its trend of development, must be discarded and that the preamble to the new programme should be devoted to a description of finance capital, i.e., imperialism, since, Bukharin said, "we now have finance capitalism and not capitalism in general." Holding their old "Left" opportunist position on the

national question Bukharin and Pyatakov also opposed the formulation in the programme which proclaimed the right of nations to self determination, i.e., the right to form themselves into independent states

But Bukharin and Pyatakov somewhat differed in their views. While rejecting this slogan, Bukharin proposed a slogan demanding self determination of the toilers, whereas Pyatakov who declared that the slogan of the right of nations to self determination was counter revolutionary, also opposed the proposal made by Bukharin. He considered that one must firmly adopt the path of strict proletarian centralisation and proletarian unity. This view was based on the following considerations. Firstly he considered that where a real revolutionary uprising of the proletariat takes place, 'it is inevitable that it should be closely united with all corresponding revolutionary movements of the toilers, and it can be accomplished only in this way', and therefore, the proletariat of any one country cannot determine its own fate independently. Considering, further, that only the will of the proletariat should be reckoned with, Pyatakov assumed the possibility of a situation arising in which the will of the proletariat would be carried into effect by coercion applied from without against the majority of the population of the country. He asserted that all talk of self determination was futile, since the line to be pursued must be directed towards economic unity, without which self determination would be a mirage and illusion.

The position taken up by both Bukharin and Pyatakov on all questions of the Party programme was very severely criticised by Lenin in his report at the Eighth Party Congress on the programme and his reply to the discussion on that report. Both these speeches principally consisted of a criticism of this "Left" aberration. The congress rejected the bookish and artificial schemes proposed by Bukharin and Pyatakov and adopted the Party programme in the form presented by the commission and advocated by Lenin.

PAGE 312 * The two symposiums on the revision of the Party programme referred to appeared in 1917. The first was *Materials Relating to the Revision of the Party Programme* (Selected Works, Vol. VI). It appeared in Petrograd and was edited by Lenin.

A little later the Moscow symposium appeared. It was also entitled *Materials Relating to the Revision of the Party Programme*, and consisted of a collection of articles by followers of Bukharin.

PAGE 313 * *Prosveshchenie* (Enlightenment) was a Bolshevik journal which appeared legally under the tsarist regime, in the years 1911 to 1914. Six issues were published during this period. It was revived in November (October) 1917, but only one double number appeared.

Spartak was a popular theoretical journal published in 1917 by the Moscow Regional Bureau, the Moscow Committee and the Moscow District Committee of the Party. Ten issues appeared.

No 12 of *Prosveshchene* contained Lenin's article entitled "Towards the Revision of the Party Programme" (*Collected Works*, Vol XXI), while *Spartak*, No 4, contained an article by Bukharin under the same title

PAGE 314 * The draft programme proposed by Lenin in 1917 was published in May of that year in the symposium *Materials Relating to the Revision of the Party Programme* (*Selected Works*, Vol VI)

PAGE 317 * Lenin is referring to the congress of the German Social Democratic Party held in Chemnitz in 1912 and the International Socialist Congress of the Second International held a little later in the same year in Basle. The German Social Democratic Congress at Chemnitz passed a separate resolution on the subject of imperialism, in which the policy of the imperialist states was described as a shameless policy of plunder and aggrandisement. It stated that imperialism which is a consequence of the capitalist system of economy, can be completely vanquished only together with the latter, and called on the Party 1) not to miss a single opportunity of mitigating the dangerous actions of imperialism, and 2) indefatigably to strive to develop the political, trade union and co-operative organisations of the class conscious proletariat in order to combat imperialism with increased energy until it is overthrown. It is the duty of the proletariat, the resolution states, to transform capitalism, which has reached its highest stage of development, into a socialist society, and thus to ensure lasting peace, independence and freedom for the peoples. The Basle International Socialist Congress was an extraordinary congress convened because of the war clouds that hung over Europe. The congress adopted a manifesto entitled 'The International Situation and United Action Against War'. A passage from this manifesto illustrating the attitude of the congress towards imperialist war has already been quoted in the note to p. 106 * in this volume. Other passages in the manifesto dwelt in detail on the conflicts between European states, which were preparing for war and described the imperialist policy of Germany, France and Great Britain as one of criminal insanity. The manifesto declared that the workers consider it a crime to shoot one another for the sake of the profits of the capitalists, the ambitions of dynasties and the glory of secret diplomatic treaties. It solemnly promised that the International would redouble its efforts in order, by intensified propaganda and constant and irreconcilable protest, to prevent the outbreak of war, and appealed to the proletarians and Socialists of all countries to make this protest both in the parliaments and by demonstrations and mass actions, and by utilising all the resources provided by the organisation and power of the proletariat. The appeals contained in the manifesto were all based on the following propositions: the proletariat had universally and simultaneously risen against imperialism, and every section of the International had confronted the government of its country with the resistance of the proletariat and had aroused public opinion against all warlike fantasies. This had led to extensive collaboration between the workers of all

countries, which had already done a great deal for the preservation of peace. The fear of the ruling classes that a proletarian revolution might result from a universal war served as a very firm guarantee of peace.

The conduct of the parties of the Second International both during and after the war was in howling contrast to the Chemnitz Resolution and the Basle Manifesto. Speaking during the imperialist war of the collapse of the Second International, Lenin frequently referred to its betrayal of its own resolutions and promises, in particular the resolutions and promises of the Chemnitz and the Basle Congresses (see *Selected Works* Vol V, The Collapse of the Second International).

This betrayal revealed that the Basle Manifesto was merely a pretence (as Lenin subsequently called it) on the part of the leaders of the Second International at dealing with the menace of war. Although contrasting the actual behaviour of the Second International during the war with the Basle Manifesto, with its appeal to the proletariat to resist war and its call for a proletarian revolution, Lenin did not consider that the Basle Manifesto set forth the real concrete tasks that faced the proletariat and the proletarian party in connection with the menace of an imperialist war. In his "Notes on the Tasks of Our Delegation to the Hague (1922)", Lenin stated that the Basle Manifesto was a concrete example of how the Socialists' theoretical recognition of the criminality of war becomes 'an empty phrase, because there is nothing concrete in such a statement of the question. In these Notes he also utters a warning against attempting in face of the threat of a new imperialist war to confine oneself to cheap, boastful and absolutely empty talk to the effect that we will not permit a war, that we fully realise the criminality of war, and so forth, in the spirit of the Basle Manifesto (*Collected Works*, Vol XXVII).

PAGE 318 * There were no Soviets of the type of Russian Soviets in 1917-18 in Finland, where there was no Bolshevik Party. After the February Revolution in Russia in 1917 the workers of Helsingfors set up a Representation of Workers' Organisations, to which various labour organisations elected deputies on the basis of one deputy for every two hundred members. Similar representations were set up all over the country and they took over the leadership of the working class movement in the various localities.

When, at the end of January 1918, the proletariat in Finland seized power, a "Chief Workers Council" was formed. It consisted of ten representatives of the Social Democratic Party (from which in Finland a Communist Party had not yet separated off), ten representatives from the trade unions, ten from the Red Guards, four from the Helsingfors Representation of Workers' Organisations and one from the organisations of the province of Nyland. The government, in the shape of the Council of People's Plenipotentiaries, was responsible to the Chief Workers Council. The local Representations of Workers' Organisations and their executive committees became organs of government which appointed the revolutionary people's courts, the municipal

bodies, the militia, etc. In many places, the commanding staffs of the Red Guards were also virtually organs of government—Revolutionary Committees.”

The organisations enumerated embraced only the organised toilers—the handicraft workers, toiling peasants and even certain groups of workers—were not represented on them.

In April 1918, the Finnish bourgeoisie, aided by the German imperialists, crushed the Finnish workers' revolution and established its dictatorship.

PAGE 321 * The old Party programme adopted by the Second Congress of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party in 1903, was divided into two parts—a maximum programme and a minimum programme.

The maximum programme set forth the final aim proposed by the Party—the accomplishment of the socialist revolution of the proletariat and the creation of a socialist society.

The minimum programme consisted of immediate demands designed for the overthrow of the tsarist autocracy and the securing of political and economic conditions which would be most favourable for the struggle against the bourgeoisie and for the socialist revolution.

Accordingly, the present Party programme, adopted by the Eighth Congress in 1919, is not divided into a maximum and a minimum programme, since the programme of a party which is guiding the dictatorship of the proletariat is a programme for the accomplishment of the final aims of the proletariat—the abolition of classes and the creation of a communist society.

PAGE 322 * The resolution on the Brest Litovsk conference to which Lenin here refers was the resolution adopted on Lenin's report by the Seventh Party Congress approving the Brest Litovsk Peace Treaty (for the full text of the resolution see *Collected Works*, Vol. XXII). The resolution not only sets forth the attitude of the Party towards the peace treaty with Germany, but also contains a number of propositions on the relations between the Soviet Republic and the capitalist world and on the tasks of the Party and the proletarian dictatorship within the country. That is why Lenin here states that this resolution had already produced theses which might serve as a basis in drawing up the programme.

PAGE 328 * The reference is to the differences between Lenin and Bukharin on the preamble of the programme, that is, whether it should deal not only with imperialism, but also with capitalism in general, and consequently with the pre-imperialist stages of capitalism, or whether—as Bukharin insisted—it should be confined to a description of imperialism (for Bukharin's views, see note to p. 311*). A detailed criticism of these views is given in Lenin's report on the Party programme at the Eighth Party Congress (pp. 395–56 in this volume). When he says here, 'I have formulated it [i.e., the difference with Bukharin—Ed.] in such a way as to leave the question open,' Lenin

is referring to the second paragraph in the resolution he proposed (pp 325-26 in this volume) beginning with the words 'The congress resolves to change down to the words 'socialist revolution which has begun

PAGE 329 * The reference is to Lenin's draft programme of 1917 published in the symposium *Materials Relating to the Revision of the Party Programme* (*Selected Works*, Vol VI) When reading the present "Rough Draft of a Programme" the reader should have before him and constantly refer to Lenin's draft of 1917 because it is to this draft that the amendments and additions here given relate

PAGE 329 ** This amendment deletes the following passage from the draft of 1917 "Objective conditions make it the urgent task of the present era to prepare the proletariat in every way for the conquest of political power with the purpose of realising the political and economic measures that make up the content of the socialist revolution" (*Selected Works*, Vol VI, p 107)

This passage became obsolete in the case of the Russian Communist Party after the October Revolution

PAGE 329 *** See this paragraph in the draft of 1917 (*Selected Works* Vol VI p 107) In the article "Towards the Revision of the Party Programme" printed in *Prosveshchenie*, 1917, No 12, Lenin proposed "to emphasise more strongly and to express more vividly in the programme the emergence of a small group of very wealthy imperialist countries which parasitically profit from the plunder of colonies and weak nations" He made a corresponding amendment in the second half of the paragraph of his draft programme of 1917 referred to (from the words 'Such a perversion is') He also proposed inserting in this paragraph after the words "the defence of the predatory interests of one's 'own' national bourgeoisie" the words "in an imperialist war" If in addition to these two amendments to this paragraph the third amendment, to which Lenin refers in the following lines of the "Rough Draft of a Programme," is inserted the passage in the draft programme would read as follows

Such a perversion is, on the one hand, the current of *opportunism and social chauvinism* socialism in word and chauvinism in deed the defence concealed under the slogan of 'national defence' of the predatory interests of one's 'own' national bourgeoisie in an imperialist war and also the defence of the privileged position of the subjects of rich nations which receive vast revenues from the plunder of colonies and weak nations Such a perversion is on the other hand the equally wide and international current of the so called Centre, which stands for unity with the social chauvinists and for the preservation or correction of the bankrupt Second International and which vacillates between *opportunism and social-chauvinism on the one hand* and the revolutionary internationalist struggle of the proletariat for the achievement of a socialist system, *on the other*' (The italics indicate the amendments proposed by Lenin)

PAGE 329 **** In Lenin's draft programme of 1917, at this point there followed the minimum programme, containing the minimum demands which could serve to strengthen the position of the proletariat in the struggle for the conversion of the bourgeois democratic revolution into a proletarian revolution. Since this conversion had already been effected in 1917 by the October Revolution and the minimum programme had thereby lost its significance Lenin in the "Rough Draft of a Programme" replaces the whole of this part of the draft of 1917 by a programme of measures which the Party guiding the dictatorship of the proletariat, should carry out in order to achieve the socialist reconstruction of the country.

PAGE 332.* Lenin proposes to insert here the following six points contained in his article "Can the Bolsheviks Retain State Power?" first published in 1917 in *Prosveshchenie* (see *Selected Works*, Vol VI, pp 263-64)

"The Soviets are a new state apparatus, which in the first place, provides an armed force of workers and peasants and this force is not divorced from the people, as was the old standing army but is fused with the people in the closest possible fashion. From a military point of view, this force is incomparably more powerful than previous forces from the point of view of the revolution it cannot be replaced by anything else. Secondly this apparatus provides a bond with the masses with the majority of the people, so intimate, so indissoluble so readily controllable and renewable that there was nothing remotely like it in the previous state apparatus. Thirdly this apparatus, by virtue of the fact that it is elected and subject to recall at the will of the people without any bureaucratic formalities is far more democratic than any previous apparatus. Fourthly it provides a close contact with the most diverse occupations, thus facilitating the adoption of the most varied and most radical reforms without a bureaucracy. Fifthly, it provides a form of organisation of the vanguard i.e. of the most class conscious, most energetic and most progressive section of the oppressed classes, the workers and peasants and thus constitutes an apparatus with the help of which the vanguard of the oppressed classes can elevate, educate and lead the *gigantic masses* of these classes which hitherto have stood remote from political life and from history. Sixthly, it provides the possibility of combining the advantages of parliamentarism with the advantages of immediate and direct democracy, i.e., of uniting in the persons of the elected representatives of the people both legislative and executive functions. Compared with bourgeois parliamentarism this represents an advance in the development of democracy which is of historical and world wide significance."

PAGE 332 ** The old minimum programme of 1903 and Lenin's draft programme of 1917, contained a clause on "unhampered freedom of conscience, speech, press, assembly, strikes and combination" (*Selected Works* Vol VI, p 117) In proposing to retain 'a brief enumeration of these liberties,' Lenin has in mind liberties for the toilers but not for the exploiters, as will be seen from the preceding paragraph in the "Rough Draft."

PAGE 334 * In the pedagogical sphere that is, in the sphere of popular education 'the old points' that is, the corresponding clauses of Lenin's draft of 1917 (see *Selected Works*, Vol VI, pp 118-19), ran as follows

"13) Separation of church from the state, and schools from the church, schools to be absolutely secular

"14) Free and compulsory general and technical education (familiarising the student with the theoretical and practical aspects of the most important branches of industry) for all children of both sexes up to the age of sixteen education to be closely associated with the performance by children of socially productive labour

"15) Students to be provided with food, clothing and educational supplies at the cost of the state

"16) Education to be entrusted to democratically elected local government bodies [under the dictatorship of the proletariat these, of course would be the local *Soviets*—Ed] the central government not to be allowed to interfere with the arrangement of the school curriculum, or with the selection of the teaching staffs teachers to be elected directly by the population itself with the right of the latter to remove undesirable teachers'

PAGE 342 * 'The Decree on Civil Marriage Children and the Registration of Civil Acts' was passed by the All Russian Central Executive Committee on December 12, 1917 This decree provided that in the future only civil marriages would be recognised At the same session of the All Russian Central Executive Committee a decree was approved dealing with the annulment of marriages, and providing that divorces should be effected by the people's courts

PAGE 345 * When the German troops began to withdraw from Poland in the autumn of 1918, a spontaneous movement started among the Polish proletariat for the creation of Soviets of Workers' Deputies as the organs of the workers' struggle for power

The first Soviets were organised in the Dombrova Coal Basin (November 8 1918) and in Warsaw (November 11, 1918) The Warsaw Soviet of Workers Deputies was headed by a joint commission representing the Social Democratic Party of Poland and Lithuania and the 'Lewica' (Left wing) of the Polish Socialist Party The Warsaw Trade Union Council also shared in the leadership of the Soviet of Workers' Deputies thus ensuring the influence of the Soviet of Workers' Deputies over the broad masses of the workers

In opposition to the revolutionary Soviet of Workers' Deputies the Polish Socialist Party set up a Soviet controlled by opportunist Socialists The Bund in its turn together with other Jewish parties, set up a Soviet in which the workers and employees were organised according to nationality

However on the insistent demand of the Executive Committee of the Warsaw Soviet of Workers' Deputies, all these Soviets were merged in one which embraced 303 enterprises representing 48,883 workers In the Soviet the Polish Socialist Party had 313 deputies and 73 sympathisers among the

other deputies, while the Communist Party of Poland which had at that time been formed from the Social Democratic Party of Poland and Lithuania and the "Lewica" of the Polish Socialist Party, had 305 deputies and 33 sympathisers among the other deputies. Together with the deputies of the Bund and other parties, and deputies not affiliated to any party, there were 1 163 deputies in all.

Shortly after this in the discussion on the question of organising a protest strike against the reprisals and indignities imposed on the workers by the bourgeois government of Poland the Polish Socialist Party opposed the strike which failed as a result. This was the beginning of the disruption of the Soviet of Workers Deputies itself. The Polish Socialist Party described the Soviets as organs which were "hostile to the Polish state and must be vigorously fought". It proposed to "reconstruct" the Soviets into "social, economic and cultural" institutions. In June 1919 the Polish Socialist Party split away from the Warsaw Soviet and again organised its own Soviet of Workers' Deputies, consisting of individuals who favoured "an independent Polish Socialist Republic". This was a manoeuvre intended to achieve the total abolition of the Soviets of Workers Deputies in Poland. With the help of the Polish Socialist Party the secret service and the police destroyed the Soviets, including the Warsaw Soviet.

With the help of the Soviets the Polish Communist Party, which had just been formed from two parties—the Social Democratic Party of Poland and Lithuania and the "Lewica" of the Polish Socialist Party—roused the masses to the struggle, but it did not pursue consistent Bolshevik tactics with the object of transforming the Soviets into the organs of armed insurrection of the proletariat, since at that time it did not possess a genuinely Bolshevik standpoint on fundamental questions of programme and tactics.

PAGE 348 * The question of utilising bourgeois experts both in socialist construction and in the organisation of the defence of the country was raised almost immediately after the conquest of power by the proletariat. In the spring of 1918 Lenin, indicating the principal tasks of economic development stressed the necessity of utilising the heritage of bourgeois society its technique, its culture and its experts. A number of striking passages in Lenin's articles and speeches of the time are devoted to this question (e.g. *Selected Works*, Vol. VII the articles "The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government" and "Left Wing Childishness and Petty Bourgeois Mentality"). Lenin continued to insist on the utilisation of bourgeois experts, on his idea that socialism cannot be built by Communists alone before the Eighth Party Congress and after, before the New Economic Policy and during the period of the New Economic Policy. For instance, in March 1922, he wrote "Without an alliance with non-Communists in the most varied fields of activity there can be no question of any successful Communist constructive work" (*Collected Works* Vol. XXVII "The Significance of Militant Materialism").

In proposing that bourgeois experts should be utilised, Lenin considered

that proper conditions of work should be created for them, both materially and by surrounding them with a comradely atmosphere. As regards the experts who took advantage of their employment on Soviet work for counter-revolutionary purposes, Lenin proposed the most severe prosecution and merciless punishment.

Lenin's view that the bourgeois experts should be utilised met in 1918 with the vigorous resistance of the Left Communists. The proposal to use bourgeois experts in economic work they interpreted as lack of faith in the strength of the proletariat, as a restoration of the domination of the experts in production and as a replacement of "reliance on the independent activity of the working class" by reliance on the assistance of experienced capitalist leaders. As regards the employment of experts in the army, the 'Lefts' interpreted this as meaning that in the sphere of military policy in practice the old officer corps and the power of the tsarist generals is being restored.

Interpreting the utilisation of bourgeois experts in this way, the Lefts absolutely failed to realise such a detail as that the experts would be used under the conditions of a proletarian dictatorship, that their activities would be under the complete control of the workers, and that the conditions of their work would be determined by the proletarian government.

Anti-expert sentiments in the Party did not disappear with the collapse of the 'Left' Communist faction, and at the Eighth Party Congress, held in March 1919, they were still reflected in the views of what was known as the military opposition, which opposed the Party on questions of the organisation of the Red Army, and in particular on the question of utilising the old military experts. As a result of the fight of the Party, headed by Lenin and Stalin, against the military opposition, its views were rejected by the congress. The programme of the Party adopted at this congress took up a clear and definite position on the question of the utilisation of experts both in the Red Army and in the work of socialist construction in general.

When the phase of the socialist reconstruction of the national economy began, particularly after the Fifteenth Party Congress, when this work of reconstruction embraced every branch of economy, when tens and hundreds of thousands of new organisers and technical leaders of production were required, and when the extreme urgency of creating these new proletarian cadres of experts was accentuated by the intensification of the class war of the new bourgeoisie against the socialist offensive, and, in this connection, by the wrecking activities of the counter-revolutionaries among the old bourgeois experts, the question of experts assumed exceptional importance.

After the victory of the proletarian revolution in Russia, Lenin and the Party, from the very outset, in addition to raising the question of utilising the old experts, insisted on the training of new cadres of proletarian experts. This purpose was fulfilled at every stage of socialist development in the Soviet Union by recruiting the students of the technical schools and higher educational centres from among workers and by setting up a system of workers'

colleges, thus creating and constantly enlarging cadres of new, Soviet experts

The question of the experts assumed particular importance during the reconstruction period of socialist development, when all branches of the national economy were undergoing socialist reconstruction and new industrial giants, equipped with the most up to date machinery, were being rapidly built and demanded hundreds of thousands of new organisers and technical leaders of production

And it was just at this period that the question of experts was complicated by the fact that the accentuation of the class struggle waged by the capitalist elements against the extended socialist offensive was reflected in an intensification of wrecking activities by the counter revolutionary section of the old experts. The wreckers rallied round the counter revolutionary organisations of the hirelings of international imperialism, such as the Engineering Centre, which was subsequently transformed into the 'Industrial Party, the Labour Party, consisting of supporters of the kulaks, and the Menshevik

Union Bureau of the Central Committee, for the purpose of jointly serving the interests of imperialists, carrying on espionage and preparing the way for intervention with the object of restoring capitalism and the power of the bourgeoisie in the Soviet Union. It is clear that under such circumstances, Stalin said, the Soviet government could adopt only one policy toward the old technical intelligentsia, namely, smash the more active wreckers, divide the neutrals and win over those who were loyal. ('New Conditions—New Tasks,') And this was the policy the Soviet government pursued under the leadership of the Party. At the same time, on the basis of the instructions of the Central Committee of the Party (the decisions of the Plenums of the Central Committee held in July 1928 and November 1929), the Soviet government performed a tremendous work in training new cadres of experts in enormous numbers and at a rapid rate, reorganising for this purpose the whole system of middle and higher technical training and covering the country with a vast number of middle and higher technical schools. Intense work in this sphere is still being carried on today, providing the country with tens of thousands of organisers and technical leaders of production, and bringing nearer the final solution of the problem of experts, one of the most important problems of socialist construction in the Soviet Union.

This period also saw a marked change of attitude among the old bourgeois experts. It is true that wrecking has not yet ceased. The accentuation of the class struggle in a period when the final liquidation of capitalist elements is being undertaken is bound to be accompanied by wrecking activities on the part of the incorrigible elements of the old technical intelligentsia. But a decided change has nevertheless taken place, as was recorded in June 1931 by Stalin in the speech quoted above ('New Conditions—New Tasks'). Stalin explained this by a number of circumstances, the chief of which were the success gained in defeating the capitalist elements in town and country and in overcoming the grain difficulties, the successful development of the collective and state farms, and the collapse— for the time being, at least—

of 'the interventionist hopes of the bourgeois intelligentsia' As Stalin said at the time 'Clearly, these new circumstances could not but influence our old technical intellectuals The new state of affairs was bound to bring about and actually has brought about, a new mental attitude on the part of the old intelligentsia And this explains the definite signs of a change in attitude in favour of the Soviet government on the part of a certain section of the intellectuals who formerly sympathised with the wreckers That, of course, Stalin said, "does not mean that there are no longer any wreckers in our midst By no means Wreckers exist and will continue to exist as long as we have classes and as long as we are surrounded by capitalism But it does mean that since a large section of the old technical intelligentsia, who formerly sympathised more or less with the wreckers, have now turned to the side of the Soviet government, the active wreckers have become very few in number and will be obliged for the time being to go deeply underground But from this it follows that our policy towards the old technical intelligentsia must be changed accordingly If, at the height of the wrecking activities, we adopted smashing tactics towards the old technical intelligentsia, now, when these intellectuals are turning towards the Soviet government, our policy towards them must be principally one of enlisting their services and caring for their needs (New Conditions—New Tasks)

While observing strict class vigilance, while exposing the active wreckers who have gone underground and punishing them ruthlessly, the Soviet government is pursuing with regard to the other members of the old technical intelligentsia the policy indicated by Stalin in his speech of June 1931

Thus, under the changing conditions of the class struggle and socialist construction, the Party has been carrying out the behests of Lenin with regard to the bourgeois experts

in the Soviets to the proletariat as compared with other sections of the electors, the constitution thereby stressed the leading role played by the working class in the proletarian state

With the final victory of socialism in town and country, the Seventh Congress of Soviets of the USSR in February 1935 resolved, on the proposal of the Central Committee of the CPSU, 'to amend the constitution of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in the direction of further democratising the electoral system by replacing not entirely equal suffrage by equal suffrage, indirect elections by direct elections, and open ballot by secret ballot '

PAGE 363 * Lenin is referring to the manifesto to the proletariat of the world on the formation of the Communist International approved by the First Congress of the Communist International, held March 2-6, 1919, in Moscow

